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INTERPRETATIONS
OF HORACE

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OF HORACE
BY THE LATE
WILLIAM MURPHY SMITH
EDITED BY
JOHN GREENE SMITH, M.A.
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.

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INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

BY THE LATE


WILLIAM MEDLEY M.A.

EDITED BY

JOHN GREEN SKEMP M.A. AND

GEORGE WATSON MACALPINE

*ἐὰν ἐν τῇ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν, ὡς αὐτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ φωτί,
κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' ἀλλήλων. 1 JOHN i. 7*



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TO HIS STUDENTS

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PREFACE

DURING his lifetime Mr. Medley published no volume except his Angus Lectures for 1900, which appeared under the title, *Christ the Truth*. His literary remains are, however, somewhat voluminous. They include valuable notes on the New Testament and especially on the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel; on Ethics and Theism; and on the Classical work which he did from time to time with his pupils. The latter comprises, besides the contents of this volume, 'Interpretations' of the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, the *Antigone* of Sophocles, and the *Alcestis* and the *Medea* of Euripides.

Mr. Medley had himself intended to publish the notes on Horace, and this is perhaps the reason why these have first seen the light. Should this volume meet with some measure of appreciation it may be followed by at least one example of his work on the great Tragedians of Greece.

In the editing of the notes care has been taken to retain as much as possible of Mr. Medley's own expression. A few footnotes have been added in accordance with his expressed intention, but only those to which his initials are appended are his own.

March 10, 1910.

INTRODUCTION

'Integer vitae scelerisque purus.'

ON the ninth day of November, 1908, there passed away from this earth one of the most gracious spirits that ever lived.

William Medley is mourned by a wide circle of friends who knew him more or less intimately and who were captivated by the charm of his personality. His capacity for friendship was wonderful, and no one was outside the range of his sympathy.

His keen enjoyment of life made him a delightful companion; he was full of brightness and bubbling over with fun. On entering a fresh circle he would at once captivate young and old, and his cheery optimism acted like a tonic on all with whom he came in contact. No one could come within the sphere of his influence without feeling his life uplifted. The simplicity and sincerity of his nature were patent; his very presence seemed to dispel all that was mean and unworthy and to raise one into an atmosphere of truth and love.

A narrower circle of men who knew him more intimately were admitted into a closer and most delightful 'fellowship'. Probably every one of these would say that this friendship had been one of the most formative factors in his life. An hour alone with William Medley by the fireside or in the fields became a cherished memory. In the simplest and most unconventional fashion he would discourse on the deepest themes. These he would illustrate in interesting and diverse fashion. The common things of life were very dear to him, and many were the lessons he would draw from seed or plant or flower. The tracing of a word-root through

b

all its life history in various languages was, in his hands, a process instinct with inexhaustible meaning.

He was a philosopher, too, with a knowledge as intimate as it was wide of the history of human thought. But it was his insight into Divine truth that fascinated most, and to this the conversation was sure ultimately to attain. His perception of truth was immediate and direct; 'We know that we know Him' was the final word. He had a fine way of disposing of the fallacy of quasi-scientific phrases. 'The reign of law!' How he delighted to cover such an expression with scorn! To him there was no reign but that of the Law-giver. Walking himself in the most intimate fellowship with God, he never failed to see His hand in the processes of nature or in the great movements of history. He saw it equally in the vicissitudes of the simplest human life.

To him 'Religion, in its all-inclusive sense', was 'the elevation of the human spirit to an ever-deepening and enlarging fellowship with the Divine Spirit'¹ on the basis of an absolute trust in God, while his conception of the highest personal relation in human life was that same absolute trust in his fellows. This to him was 'the ground condition of those rare friendships whose very life is in communion'.² On the contrary, 'I cannot trust him' was a sentence of banishment into outer darkness.

This central conception of 'fellowship' on a basis of 'trust', running through all his relations, Divine and human, lent a wonderful charm and unity to his life, and, as the consciousness of the Divine seemed never for a moment to be broken, he did not fail to lead those who enjoyed his intimate friendship into the very presence of God.

It is not remarkable that the influence of such a life upon the students who were brought under his care should be unique, or that his should have been the dominating influence in the lives of many of their number. He was a great teacher. Some of his pupils came, in later years, under the tuition of men whose names are outstanding in the academic world, and their testimony is that no one of these approached Medley in

¹ *Christ the Truth*, p. 189.

² *Ibid.*, p. 196.

insight. 'His success was not simply the result of a happy knack; it was the outcome of years of reflection upon education in general, and upon education for the Christian ministry in particular. His method was intensive rather than extensive. Especially in the classics would he insist upon our seizing the exact significance of the idiom, nay, even the very vocabulary. Learning, under his guidance, to be sensitive to fine shades of meaning in words commonly used as synonyms, we came in some sort to see the ethical import of speech.'¹ 'From the beginning language was alive with thought and the barren field of accident broke into beauty at his touch.'² 'The thing that seems to live in one's memory,' writes one of his earliest students, 'is how the declension of a word such as *δόξα* would serve to lead us into "the high and holy place" of hushed sublimities.' 'He recreated for us,' says another, 'the most familiar words and clothed them with undreamed-of splendour—truth, duty, life, light, fellowship, love.'³

For nearly forty years he taught the students in Rawdon College—Logic, Philosophy, Classics, 'Introduction to the Study of the New Testament'⁴—and everything he taught was illuminated by his genius. However diverse the subjects with which he had to deal, he never failed to bring them into vital relation one to another or to Christ, the central Truth. 'One of his dominating conceptions was that of the Unity of Knowledge. Of this there is abundant evidence in his Angus Lectures. As a teacher it admitted him into a large freedom, for, in his view, there was no realm of knowledge which lay outside the range of a Christian man's interest. But it laid upon him the duty of being absolutely loyal to the method

¹ Extract from a letter of Professor Harold C. Rowse, M.A., of Rawdon College.

² Extract from a letter of the Rev. E. Ernest Coleman, M.A., Nottingham.

³ Memorial Address by Professor S. W. Green, M.A., Regent's Park College.

⁴ This was Medley's own designation for this course of study, but his treatment was quite remote from the discussion of critical and historical questions to which the term 'Introduction' is generally applied. His exposition moved on broad lines, and his purpose was to exhibit the organic unity of the New Testament. This he achieved by a study of the forms of literature comprised within it and of the ideas underlying its several books.

and date of any subject which he was studying. He had a very definite conception, not only of the relation of all subjects to Christ, the central Truth, but also of their relation to one another. The "curriculum" he thought of as a series of concentric circles: Deductive Logic, the rigid discipline of consistency; Scientific Method, the attempt to ensure consistency of thought with fact; Philosophy, the culmination of human knowledge on the purely intellectual side; Ethics, the intellectual handling of data supplied by a new source, the Will; Theism, the final stage in knowledge, where neither Intellect merely, nor Will merely, but all human faculties sought and found satisfaction. Such a scheme spread over the whole course and, while it illuminated each special subject of study, bound the years together as stages in one direct movement of thought.¹

It was in the course of his ordinary class-work, and in illustration of the Latin textbook for the year, that the 'Interpretations' were given of which the somewhat copious notes are to be found in this volume. 'His own description of his method, in the College Report of 1892-3, applied pre-eminently to his Horace class: "Much of these informal lectures might be fitly described as the lecturer's thinking aloud with his class." We read the text and he would then expound, or, as he used to say, with his eye, as ever, on etymology, "discuss, that is, shake out all its meaning."'²

But, it will be asked, what was there in common between the fine spirit which has just been delineated and 'that old heathen, Horace', some of whose Odes he sought to interpret? It may be answered that the very divergence of nature illustrates admirably the way in which William Medley could uplift and illumine everything he touched, so that the experiences of human life received at his hands a new meaning. He would probably have protested that there is nothing in the 'Interpretations' that is not latent in the thought of Horace, for he ever shrank from forcing upon a word or phrase an interpretation which it would not bear. But most will recognize that the commentary here presented

¹ Letter from Professor Rowse.

² Ibid.

is more than an interpretation of the thought of Horace, is, indeed, a new interpretation of the facts of human life and destiny with which Horace dealt.

Yet there was much in Horace that was attractive to Medley, and, pagan and Epicurean as Horace was, there were some things in common between the two men. The felicity of the language of the Odes and their lucid and happy expression are in themselves attractive to such a mind as Medley's, and the graphic images called up by a skilful arrangement of words—the cameos, as they are so frequently called in the commentary—were obviously a constant source of delight to the expositor.

Moreover, the two men had the same simple tastes, the same keen enjoyment of country life. Horace had his Sabine farm which maintained him in ease and comfort. Medley, too, had his modest competency, and his own dearly-loved 'angulus terrarum' at the Nook, where so many of his friends have spent with him delightful hours, and which it was the highest privilege of his students to visit. And, indeed, a cosy nook it was, standing in its little garden-plot where our friend used to watch, in the early spring, for the snowdrop and the daffodil, and to rejoice, in the later months, in the auricula, the tulip, or the rose. Behind was the wood, which in June was carpeted with the blue of the wild hyacinth. On the opposite side of the Aire the village of Calverley rose above the forest of sycamores in the foreground. It was William Medley's delight to walk up the quiet lane and, leaning on the field-gate, to gaze across to Wrose Hill in the distance; or, summer and winter, to walk up to Rawdon Church, enjoying the bright sunshine and the fresh breeze, or equally, perhaps, the struggle with the warring elements. There he revelled in the spacious outlook over the wide valley. His daily walk to and from the College through the quiet lane, bounded on the one side by the pines and the beech-wood and on the other by a long row of chestnut-trees which he had known as saplings, was to him a constant benediction. Nature spoke to him through every sense.

Another characteristic common to the poet and his inter-

preter is that capacity for friendship which has already been referred to in the case of the latter, and which runs through all the writings of Horace and especially through the Epistles. It is doubtless true that their conceptions of the elements of comradeship are wide asunder as the poles; nevertheless, there is the same genius for true and hearty friendship in both the men.

A common love and admiration for everything that was Greek would also have formed a strong tie between these men. The language of Greece was to Medley a source of unceasing delight, and her poets and philosophers were his constant companions. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides received from him the same delightful interpretation as the Odes of Horace.¹ His acquaintance with Plato was intimate, and the dialogues which hinge upon the trial and death of Socrates—the *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*²—were to him an especial source of interest and enjoyment. 'He was most at home with Plato. Christ was to him the living centre of all truth, just as the "Idea of the Good" to the Greek. I shall never forget the almost sacramental seasons in which we lingered over the *Phaedo* and the *Apology* of Socrates, interspersed as our studies were with scenes from Aristophanes introduced in order that we might grasp the current Athenian view of the case. With equal solemnity we were taught to appreciate the world-problem as presented in one of the Greek Dramatists, as, for example, in the *Antigone* of Sophocles.'³

But that in which the two men diverge widely is their conception of religion, and here the interpreter rises to a level infinitely above that of the old Latin poet. The faith of Horace in the gods is conventional. Even after his 'conversion'⁴ it is to be feared that he was little more than

¹ See Preface.

² 'These are the only dialogues that I have known Mr. Medley read with the men in class; but, from notes of lectures on the Platonic Philosophy which he let me have privately, it is evident that he knew the *Republic* in the original equally well, while through all his thinking the influence of the "Theory of Ideas" was manifest.' Letter from Professor Rowse.

³ Letter from the Rev. E. E. Coleman, M.A.

⁴ Ode i. 34.

'*parcus deorum cultor et infrequens*'. His sense of providence, though somewhat ostentatiously paraded in all his writings, is vague and sterile, impotent to exercise any real influence on his life. In the great future there lies nothing but gloom. For him

La vie est vaine :
 Un peu d'amour,
 Un peu de haine...
 Et puis—bonjour !
 La vie est brève :
 Un peu d'espoir,
 Un peu de rêve...
 Et puis—bonsoir !¹

Or, if there is anything beyond, it is

nox fabulaeque Manes
 et domus exilis Plutonia.

How different was the attitude of William Medley to the things invisible! How intimately was every detail of his life brought into subjection to the Divine will and placed under Divine guidance! His favourite text, the pole-star of his life, was Eph. ii. 10, 'We are His workmanship' (*ποίημα*)—His poem, as he was wont to expound—'created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them,' and his sole purpose was to trace the path set out for him by God and to travel along it with humble and contrite heart. Similarly, his whole outlook towards the future was that of a bright and confident hope of more intimate 'fellowship' with Him in whom his heart delighted.

Hence it comes that, in interpreting Horace in the course of his daily work, William Medley has illumined and transfigured the conceptions to which the poet had already given concrete and vivid expression.

¹ Quoted by George Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion*, p. 153.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. I CAR. I

LIB. I CAR. I

Maecenas atavis edite regibus,
o et praesidium et dulce decus meum,
sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
collegisse iuvat, metaque fervidis

evitata rotis palmaque nobilis. 5
terrarum dominos evehit ad deos
hunc, si mobilium turba Quiritium
certat tergeminis tollere honoribus ;

illum, si proprio condidit horreo 10
quidquid de Libycis verritur areis.
gaudentem patrios findere sarculo
agros Attalicis condicionibus

numquam dimoveas ut trabe Cypria
Myrtoum pavidus nauta secet mare.
luctantem Icariis fluctibus Africum 15
mercator metuens otium et oppidi

laudat rura sui ; mox reficit rates
quassas, indocilis pauperiem pati.
est qui nec veteris pocula Massici
nec partem solido demere de die 20

spernit, nunc viridi membra sub arbuto
stratus, nunc ad aquae lene caput sacrae.
multos castra iuvant et lituo tubae
permixtus sonitus bellaque matribus

detestata. manet sub Iove frigido 25
venator tenerae coniugis immemor,
seu visa est catulis cerva fidelibus,
seu rupit teretes Marsus aper plagas.

me doctarum hederæ præmia frontium
dis miscent superis, me gelidum nemus 30
nympharumque leves cum Satyris cñori
secernunt populo, si neque tibiae

Euterpe cohibet nec Polyhymnia
Lesboum refugit tendere barbiton.
quodsi me lyricis vatibus inseres, 35
sublimi feriam sidera vertice.

BOOK I ODE I
TO MAECENAS THE POET'S PATRON

Most Noble Lord, the pillor of my life,
And Patrone of my Muses pupillage;
Through whose large bountie, poured on me rife
In the first season of my feeble age,
I now doe live, bound yours by vassalage;
Sith nothing ever may redeeme, nor reave
Out of your endlesse debt, so sure a gage,
Vouchsafe in worth this small giuft to receave,
Which in your noble hands for pledge I leave
Of all the rest that I am tyde t'account:
Rude rymes, the which a rustick Muse did weave
In savadge soyle, far from Parnasso Mount,
And roughly wrought in an unlearned Looome:
The which vouchsafe, dear Lord, your favourable doome.

SPENSER.

THE ODE IN GENERAL.—This ode is clearly introductory, whether to the first book or to the first three books. It illustrates Horace's power as a consummate master of poetic expression. Creative, in the poet's sense of imaginative creation, he shows himself here, selecting and combining sense-impressions to express ideas. Such ideas are in various degrees concerned with human life, as indeed all true poetry is essentially, in the words of Matthew Arnold, 'a criticism of life'.

Like all art, poetry is a mode of descent from a universal idea at once satisfying and quickening to our feeling for beauty, to some particular presentation of it in the concrete; just as philosophy is the converse ascent from such particulars to the abstract idea which unifies them. And if this artistic product be, as commonly it is, complex, yet the complexity should not be allowed to escape the control of the governing conception nor to break the harmonized unity of impression. Thus, while Horace touches on many points in these odes, each is nevertheless governed by a unity of conception which holds it together and, when apprehended, illuminates and interprets its detail.

In this ode we find one controlling and inspiring purpose—the vindication, or rather the exalting of his own vocation as a poet. It is a high vocation. This is brought out in the natural, the inevitable way of comparison with other human ends and objects.

So we have a vivid, picturesque survey of some of the various typical pursuits of men, selecting especially those expressive of the tastes, the ambitions and delights of persons free to gratify them. The whole series is presented in order to supply a foil on which may stand out conspicuous and vivid his own vocation as poet. Set aloft, apart from all others, this shines forth as sacred, glorious, divine.

We may compare these several pictures to finely cut cameos, each of them a small, delicate etching in verse, where every word and every turn of phrase tells.

VERSES I, 2:

The Poet begins and ends this ode with a delicate compliment to the great Augustan statesman, **Maecenas**,¹ at once his patron and his friend. The poem has thus its setting in a personal relation, and that with the highest person in his range of friendship and fellowship.

The first verse gives us the height of it—**atavis edite regibus**, the second its nearness to himself—**praesidium et dulce decus meum**. 'Sprung from a line of kings'; this high lineage, reaching up into the legends of ancient Etruria, would seem to cut off the great man from the freedman's son.

But no! the second verse brings him near to the poet and seals the bond between them with that emphatic **meum** which closes the line.

Three elements, in verse two, compose this personal relation:

(1) **Praesidium**, 'safety,' 'security,' given in no abstract quality but in imagery and figure, as a poet should give it; just as in Psalms xc, xci we find the terms 'fortress', 'tower', 'refuge', 'dwelling-place', or, in Luther's Hymn: *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*.

¹ **Maecenas**] A counsellor of Augustus who was held in high esteem by him and who was entrusted with the administration of Italy during the civil wars ('Augustus bellis civilibus Cilnium Maecenatem cunctis apud Romam atque Italiam praeposuit,' Tac. Ann. vi. 11). He kept a free but not too select table at Rome and his private life was not irreproachable. Himself a writer both in prose and verse of but little merit, his name nevertheless became proverbial as that of a patron of the poets, notably of Horace, to whom he was specially generous, and of Virgil who wrote the Georgics at his suggestion (o decus, o famae merito pars maxima nostrae, Maecenas. —Geor. ii. 40). Cf. Smith's Dict. of Biog. ii. 890.

(2) *Decus* adds an element which many a secure life lacks ; grace is added to strength.

There rises before us, not the picture of the bastioned fortress in its rugged strength, but that of the massive cathedral with the rich tracery of its Gothic windows, or the Greek temple with its perfect symmetry. So again the Psalmist: 'The Lord God is a sun and shield ; the Lord will give grace and glory' ; 'Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.'

(3) The poet penetrates from the exterior of life to its inmost heart and drops in the word *dulce*, which finds its personal reference in the *meum* which follows: 'sweet to my soul.'

To us surely the two verses may well read as an adumbration of the safety, glory and blessedness of a religion which centres in communion with the Most High.

VERSES 3-5:

This Latin poet is steeped in the Greek spirit and draws his inspiration thence. He is ever acknowledging his indebtedness to this source. It was his ambition, he tells us—his glory when he felt he had achieved it—to naturalize Greek song in the Latin tongue.¹ So here, in this first ode, he begins and closes with a reference to Hellas, sovereign fountain of all poetry and art ; to her games (vv. 3-5), and to her Muses (vv. 33, 34).

The first, then, of these cameos is from a scene in which Greek life found its most conspicuous and brilliant illustration—the games at Olympia. In three vivid lines the poet exhibits that which stood out first among the Greeks as an object of ambition, which also gave to the ties of blood and of religion which bound together the Hellenic race its most illustrious embodiment.

In an instant we are on the race-course at Olympia. This too at the critical moment when the race is won and the Olympic victor has attained the culminating point of national distinction.

All is tersely but perfectly expressed. Each word tells to its uttermost.

Iuvat gives the absorbing sovereign delight of the contest, which itself is pictured in its three stages :

(1) There is first the swift rush of the car from the barriers, signalized by the cloud of whirling dust : *pulverem Olympi-*

¹ dicar . . .
princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos
deduxisse modos.—iii. 30. 13.

cum collegisse. Note how, by the selection of so mean a thing as dust, the poet contrives to exhibit the glorifying power of the qualifying adjective. This dust is Olympic dust—a possible keen side-thrust at the sordid miser's **iuvat collegisse.**

(2) Now the race is half run. The metae, the turning posts at the far end of the double course, are just shaved by the glowing wheels of the car, marking the charioteer's feat of skill and speed :

metaque fervidis

evitata rotis.

(3) Finally, we see the combatant home to the starting-point. Victor! The award a simple palm-branch, but **palma¹ nobilis**, conferring distinction for ever.

Place the period at **nobilis**,² and we have our second cameo, giving in an instant a new scene.

VERSES 6-8:

In a moment we are away from Hellas and in the familiar Rome of the poet's day. The Roman whose genius is for conquest, rule, law, now stands before us, **terrarum dominus.**

Here it is high office³ and vast wealth that stir to ambitious pursuit; these, not the glories of athletic contest, are the prizes of life: sic itur ad astra. **Terrarum dominos** is brought into emphatic relation to **deos**; earthly lordship raises to heavenly rank.

Then follows a picture of the people's favourite. The citizen electors vie with one another to raise him to the highest place.

¹ **palma]** ἐν μὲν δὴ Ὀλυμπία κοτίνου τῷ νικῶντι δίδοσθαι στέφανον καὶ ἐν Δελφοῖς δάφνης· ἐν Ἴσθμῳ δὲ ἡ πίκτυς καὶ ἐν Νεμέᾳ τὰ σέλινα· οἱ δὲ ἀγῶνες φοῖνικος ἔχουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ στέφανον· ἐς δὲ τὴν δεξιάν ἐστι καὶ πανταχοῦ τῷ νικῶντι ἐστιθέμενος φοῖνιξ.—PAUSANIAS, 8. 48.

In the early days of Christianity the palm became the symbol of the prize of martyrdom. Cf. Rev. vii. 9-14.

² **nobilis.]** The punctuation adopted by Mr. Medley, whilst it departs from the practice of most of the editors (Bentley, Orelli, Wickham, Page, &c.), is strongly supported. It was first adopted by Gataker (*Adversaria Miscellanea*, London, 1659), who was followed by Rutger, Maclean, Munro, and by Gow in the *Corpus Poetarum Latinorum* (London, 1894). It overcomes the difficulty of bringing a second principal verb (**evehit**) into the first sentence, which Bentley recognized to be so serious that he proposed to read 'evehere'.

³ The **tergemini honores** of the text are those of curule aedile, of praetor and of consul.

8 INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

But after all are they not a mob? aye, and fickle as the wind: *mobilium turba Quiritium*. Yet for the moment the *aura popularis*¹ swells the sails of this man.

VERSES 9, 10:

Then, for counter figure, stands the great man of commerce and speculation, represented as a giant figure sweeping into his own granary and storing up therein the grain of fertile Egypt, making the wealth² of a province his own.

No abstract word is used. We see it all before our eyes; the man of greed, the great barn, the threshing-floor. We see, too, the whirling chaff, as before we saw the whirling dust—both in themselves worthless, yet each implying what is held to be of great price—the one wealth, the other glory.

VERSES 11-14:

Again the scene changes. There are those whose delight is in none of these things. The peasant proprietor stands before us now. No wealth can tempt this yeoman from his small patch of land. It was his father's; it is now his own; it is his joy to cleave the clod with his hoe.

Hard work, bare living! but for this man it has a soul. The pride of honest independence traditional in his family is his.

This man no promise of riches will ever induce to become a *mercator*, a travelling merchant, and so take the road to fortune. That would be to exchange his joy for trembling fear, *gaudens* for *pavidus*, the terra firma for the rocking sea; his cottage floor for the heaving deck, the cleaving of the clod for the ploughing of the deep. The *agricola* would be transformed into the *nauta*.

So the two pictures stand side by side, each setting off the other; the one, the security of the land cheaply purchased with arduous toil, the other, the terrors of the sea uncompensated by fabulous wealth; while the Proper adjectives, *Attalici*, *Cypria*, *Myrtoum*, are appended, with no very special emphasis on the exact meaning of the attributes, to give concrete individuality to the several substantives.

¹ *nec sumit aut ponit secures
arbitrio popularis aurae.*—iii. 2. 19.

² Compare this other picture of great wealth:

*si Libyam remotis
Gadibus iungas et uterque Poenus
serviat uni.*—ii. 2. 10.

VERSES 15-18:

He whom the wealth of an Attalus will not induce to exchange the comforts of his hearth for the perils of the deep now passes off the stage and his place is taken by another—a man who will, at all risks, be rich; who has broken away from the peaceful country life and its rustic avocations which the other loves and to which he clings.

The transition is not simply that from land to sea, it is to the sea as the high road to wealth. This man is not *nauta* simply but *mercator*.

Nor is it merely a voyage that is now pictured; but a storm with all its terrors and perils, such as might suffice to thrust the bravest back to his peaceful life at home.

The storm is depicted of course as a poet would depict it. Fierce blasts from the south-west are wrestling in furious conflict with the waves. For the moment the man is terrified. What a fool he has been to exchange the peace and security of his country home for the fearful hazards of this new life! The vision of his old home comes up before him. How safe and sweet it is, that homestead nestling in the quiet fields beside his native town!

Ah! he praises it now. He would give anything to be there again:

*mercator metuens otium et oppidi
laudat rura sui.*

But see! the storm has passed, and, though his bark is shattered, the lust for gain revives. It has been a narrow escape, but his spirit is not broken, his ruling passion reasserts itself. He makes haste to refit and put to sea again. Content with humble means is lore he cannot, will not learn:

*mox reficit rates
quassas, indocilis pauperiem¹ pati.*

VERSES 19-22:

The pleasure-lover and idler is now set vividly before us; the feast and the wine-cup. The solid working-day is broken

¹ *pauperiem*] 'humble circumstances', the condition of life which Horace chose for himself and which he frequently extols and contrasts with the cares of wealth:

*puræ rivus aquæ silvæque iugerum
paucorum et segetis certa fides meæ
fulgentem imperio fertilis Africae
fallit sorte beatior.*—iii. 16. 29.

The lordly merchant, on the contrary, was frequently
magnas inter opes inops.—iii. 16. 28.

Yet 'pauperies' must not become 'importuna' (v. 37), for this is 'poverty'.

in upon by sleep; not well-earned rest after honest labour, but the sleep in the day-time which follows indulgence.

Amidst luxury too! the goblets are filled with rich old wine of choicest brand, and around the reveller are lawns and planted trees and gushing springs.

We see the rich man's mansion and pleasure-grounds, not the peasant's hut or the farmer's homestead. There he is himself stretched at full length on the soft turf, in the shade of the arbut tree, sleeping off his wine; and the soft murmur of some nymph-haunted stream, as it ripples from its well-spring, is in his ear.

VERSES 23-25^A:

In an instant the scene changes to its extreme opposite. We have a picture of alert, keen, military life. Indulgence now gives place to discipline. War, the absorbing delight of many, is drawn in three vivid strokes.

Life in the camp comes first, standing for military training:
multos castra iuvant.

Then the call to arms—trumpet and bugle with their several suggestions of infantry and cavalry. Both are summoned; the deep blare of the trumpet mingles with the shrill note of the bugle:

et lituo tubae

permixtus sonitus.

Finally the battle itself, the clash of arms, the carnage, the wail of mothers over brave sons lying slain:

bellaque matribus

detestata.

VERSES 25^B-28:

The last of these cameo etchings from life depicts the keen sportsman whose passion is the chase.

It may be the timid hind that is started by his staunch hounds, or perchance the fierce wild-boar crashes through the close-knit toils.

The night is keen, one can see the glittering points of the stars in the frosty sky. But the man is keener than the wintry night. **Manet**: he stands at watch, alert.

Alas! his young bride watches too, wearily waiting for his return.

But for the moment even she is forgotten. The chase excites, absorbs this lover; nothing else is heeded.

VERSES 29-34:

The series of typical pictures of human pursuits and

passions is ended. And now, abruptly, Horace sets up in sharp, brilliant contrast with them all his own vocation—picturesquely still, as a poet should.

His first cameo was from life in Hellas, and he now returns to Greece. But it is no longer her sport but her poetry, and with what exultation does he exalt his own calling! It is now the heavenly Olympus, not the earthly Olympia, which comes into view; not the companionship of men who greet with their plaudits the victor in the chariot-race, but admission to the society of heaven, and that for the poet himself:

me . . .

dis miscent superis;

not the palm-branch for the hand, but the ivy-wreath, symbol of inspiration, for the brow.

Homage to Hellas as the Fount of Poesy is now exhibited in every line. **Doctarum** would seem to assert his claim to be a master in her school. Greek references abound: **nympharum, Satyris, chori, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, Lesboum barbiton.**

Then, surely, one admitted to the Society of the Blessed on high must lead on earth a consecrated life, a life apart: **secernunt populo.**¹ This life he images in what follows.

He loves to wander in the cool woodland, the sacred grove, far from the stress and fever of the world's ambitions and pursuits.

There, in the secluded glades, he becomes aware of spiritual presences which others miss. Lo! music and dancing of nymphs and satyrs whose haunt is the woodland.

Then looking up he acknowledges humbly his dependence upon the heavenly powers. **Doctarum** is not enough; mastery of Greek poetry will not in itself suffice; learning is dead, if inspiration be not there to put within it a soul. The Lyric Muse must lend her breath to his flute; the Goddess of the Sublime Hymn must tune for him the lyre of Lesbos.²

Thus he covers all varieties of lyric poetry.

VERSES 35, 36:

So the poem rounds to its conclusion—returns to its key-note with an appeal to Maecenas—returns to that personal relation in which all its gems are set.

¹ **secernunt populo]** 'ubi solus loca amoena perambulo, lyrica carmina meditans, plebe longe superiorem me esse sentio.'—ORELLI.

² **Lesbos]** 'where burning Sappho loved and sung'.

Maecenas**o et praesidium et dulce decus meum,**

thou, judge of all true poetic worth, 'write' thou 'my name among that minstrel choir'. Then is my highest ambition achieved, an ambition pure as it is high, and I shall touch the stars.

sublimi feriam sidera vertice.¹

¹ Contrast the more modest sentiment of Sappho :

ψαῦτήν δ' οὐ δοκίμοιμ' ὀράνω δύσει πάχουσιν.—Frag. 37 (Wharton).

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. I CAR. IV

LIB. I CAR. IV

Solvitur acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni,
trahuntque siccas machinae carinas,
ac neque iam stabulis gaudet pecus aut arator igni,
nec prata canis albicant pruinis.

iam Cytherea choros ducit Venus imminente Luna,
iunctaeque Nymphis Gratiae decentes 6
alterno terram quatunt pede, dum graves Cy-
Vulcanus ardens visit officinas. [clorum

nunc decet aut viridi nitidum caput impedire myrto
aut flore terrae quem ferunt solutae; 10
nunc et in umbrosis Fauno decet immolare lucis,
seu poscat agna sive malit haedo.

pallida Mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas
regumque turres. o beate Sesti,
vitaesumma brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam.
iam te premet nox fabulaeque Manes 16

et domus exilis Plutonia; quo simul mearis,
nec regna vini sortiere talis,
nec tenerum Lycidan mirabere, quo calet iuventus
nunc omnis et mox virgines tepebunt. 20

BOOK I ODE IV
THE COMING OF SPRING

Wil. Thomalin, why sytten we soe
As weren overwent with woe,
 Upon so fayne a morrow!
The joyous time now nighes fast,
That shall allege this bitter blast,
 And shake the winter's sorowe.
Tho. Sicker, Willye, thou warnest well;
For Winter's wrath begins to quell,
 And pleasant Spring appeareth:
The grasse now ginnes to be refresht,
The Swallow peepes out of her nest,
 And clowdie Welkin cleareth.

SPENSER.

This ode is one of many in which Horace preaches, as a poet may, from a favourite text: *carpe diem*.

Time flies; life is short; death is near. Seize the present hour; be happy while you can.

But when a poet moralizes, it is by imagery; and here again, as in Ode I, the imaginative creation is consummate in fitness and fineness of etching; so tersely drawn, yet so full and finished.

The ode is a picture in a setting.

The picture is Spring; the revival, in our human world, of life, of labour and of pleasure. The setting is the opposing foil—Winter and Death.

These two answer to each other. Winter is suggested by and lies behind the first stanza. Death breaks in with startling abruptness in stanza four.

VERSES 1-4:

The first word has a leap of triumph in it: **Solvitur**.
Once again the earth is free!

Keen Winter's grip of the iron-bound earth is loosening; then is our human life set free. Through all the avenues of sense we feel that grim Winter, the hard black frost—**acris hiems**—is yielding.

There is a tender blue in the sky and a soft breath in the air which tells us Spring¹ is here once more. The sweet vicissitude of the seasons is accomplished; the balmy zephyr from the West is blowing; gentleness triumphs over harshness, and men are free once more to toil and to rejoice.

The Pleiades—the sailing-stars—have risen, and navigation is possible again. There is activity about the beached ships. Keels made to cut the waves have for months been high and dry on the shore. Now all hasten with ropes and rollers to haul them down to the water, the element in which ships are at home and live.

Then a swift glance is shot at the same activity in the farmer's homestead and his fields.

What is seen is rendered negatively.

In winter days, from which there is now release, the cattle were in the stalls, the ploughman by his hearth. Shelter from the cold and storm had been for both their joy.

Without, the meadows glistened white with the rime of the frost.

All were waiting, idly waiting for the advent of the gracious Spring which should set free the flocks and herds to roam grazing through the fields, and send the ploughman to his plough; which should make the grass to spring and the meadows to grow green, and should deck field and bank and hedgerow with spring flowers: *terrae quem ferunt solutae*.

VERSES 5-8:

The second stanza gives in brief, and picturesquely as before, the awakening of the world to pleasure and to labour. Both are here at their height, typically given in vivid pictures. Each has a divinity as leader and patron; Venus dances, Vulcan toils.

Here is an evening scene, beneath the early summer moon overhanging lustrous in the soft air.

We feel the contrast to the far-off clear cold orb of the frosty winter sky.

The queen of night shines in her beauty, shedding her warm, mellow light upon the sward where the dancers sport.

Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,
Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
Joyous, th' impatient husbandman perceives
Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers
Drives from the stalls, to where the well-us'd plough
Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.
There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark.

THOMSON.

The Queen of Beauty herself leads the choirs. Graces perfect in form link with fair maiden figures—oreads, dryads, naiads—nymphs of mountain, tree, and stream. This to the eye; while to the ear is the rhythm of the dancers' footfall making the earth quiver beneath it. The loveliness of perfect form and rhythm of movement is Greek in conception to the core.

Then, in an instant, is set before us a scene exactly opposite in character, in tone, in associations. The figure of the god Vulcan appears, the exact antithesis of Venus.

No longer beauty, but sheer strength is depicted; not now delight, but toil; not the soft liquid light of the summer moon, but the glow of furnace-fires.

Vulcanus ardens; we see him standing there in the red glow.

The soft, smooth dancing-sward changes to the grim forge in Etna's depths, where the swart Cyclopes hammer out the glowing metal into thunderbolts for Jove. The soft beat of the maidens' feet gives place to ring and clang of giants' hammers.

VERSES 9-12:

Again a change of pictured scene, partitioned into two slight etchings from the joyous life that Spring introduces and symbolizes. The first is a banquet indoors, the second a rural festival in the woods. They are linked by *decet*, expressing beautiful fitness.

We see the banqueters, their hair glistening with sweet, costly unguents and crowned with the garland, the myrtle wreath, and spring flowers; colour set in fresh green, a living witness to the gracious power of the Spring. **Solvitur** reappears in **terrae solutae**; beauty springs from the liberated earth.

Then, in the depths of the shady grove, a village festival is kept, the festival of Spring. 'The pastures are clothed with flocks,' the hill-side with herds of goats.

To Faunus, standing as the favouring patron of flocks and herds, the shepherd folk offer their tribute. Let him choose what he will from the firstlings, lamb or kid. It is a time of joy, of sacrifice; and so, in festival, the thank-offering is paid, the rural holiday is kept.

And now the poet's pictures from the book of life come to their close. The lesson they read is this: 'Be up and doing; work, play, toil, dance, sing, feast; live and rejoice; "eat, drink, be merry"—now, while you may.' Such is the meaning of that emphatic, reiterated **nunc**.

VERSES 13-20:

Then, without a word of introduction, the black line is drawn. We see now not merely *acris hiems*, but *pallida Mors*. All was warmth and colour in the scenes we have just gazed upon; now chill, pale Death, a grisly figure, stands impartial on the doorstep, be it that of palace or of hovel; his victim, king or slave.¹

The knock² is heard, the door flies open. No force can hinder, no bribe avail, no parleying delay. The King of Terrors seizes his prey, and for him that *vitae summa brevis* is completed.

'Be wise, then, Sestius, my friend. Thou hast the means, *o beate Sesti*;³ use them now. Thy house is wide and richly furnished, enjoy it now with thy friends, for near at hand is the narrow grave and beyond is Pluto's meagre hall.

'Indulge no far-off hopes. *Iam*—now, already—*premet nox fabulaeque Manes*: night presses and the dim world of fabled ghosts. No pleasures there of love and wine. Now take thy fill of these. Eat, drink, be merry, for to-morrow we die.'

¹ Compare ii. 14. 9 ff.; also:

La mort a des rigeurs a nulle autre pareilles;
On a beau la prier,
La cruelle qu'elle est se bouche les oreilles,
Et nous laisse crier.

Le pauvre en sa cabane, où le chaume le couvre,
Est sujet à ses lois;
Et la garde qui veille aux barrières du Louvre
N'en défend point nos Rois.—MALHERBE.

² *pulsat pede*] The Greeks and Romans used the foot when knocking at the door:

καὶ δὴ πον τὰ θύρετρα καλῶ ποδὶ Φοῖβος ἀράσσει.

CALLIMACHUS, Hymn Apoll. 3.

³ Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and Future Fears—
To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too unto the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reach'd
The NOTHING it set out from—Oh, make haste!

OMAR KHAYYÂM.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. I CAR. V

LIB. I CAR. V

Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa
perfusus liquidis urget odoribus
grato, Pyrrha, sub antro?
cui flavam religas comam,

simplex munditiis? heu quotiens fidem 5
mutatosque deos flebit et aspera
nigris aequora ventis
emirabitur insolens,

qui nunc te fruitur credulus aurea,
qui semper vacuum, semper amabilem 10
sperat, nescius aurae
fallacis! miseri, quibus

intemptata nites. me tabula sacer
votiva paries indicat uvida
suspendisse potenti 15
vestimenta maris deo.

BOOK I ODE V

A ROMAN LADY VERE DE VERE

I'll gaze no more on her bewitching face,
 Since ruin harbours there in every place;
 For my enchanted soul alike she drowns
 With calms and tempests of her smiles and frowns.
 I'll love no more those cruel eyes of hers,
 Which pleas'd or anger'd still are murderers.

THOMAS CAREW.

This is an ode full of delicate irony, written from the point of view of one who is himself a rejected suitor.

It opens with a picture of the lady's wooing by her latest lover who thinks himself her last.

Her beauty is given in the slightest hint, but a hint full of suggestion. She is **Pyrrha**,¹ the fair lady of the golden hair whose beauty no ornament can enhance. 'Unadorned adorned the most,' her figure stands before us **simplex munditiis**—a descriptive phrase which eludes adequate translation.² Perfect figure is suggested and glowing colour (**Pyrrha**), with an especial stress on the crowning grace of her golden hair. This is the feature emphasized for us as she is introduced in the act of preparing to meet her lover: **flavam religas comam**.³ We can see the fair damsel binding up her gleaming tresses in wreathed coils and braids.

VERSES 1-13^A:

The tone is given to the picture and the interpretation suggested, sharply and at once, by the first word, **quis**, repeated in the **cui** of verse four. Each word stings: 'Who? . . . for whom?' There have been many; there will be more; who is it now?

¹ **Pyrrha**] Cf. *πυρρός*.

² Milton's 'plain in thy neatness' hardly does the phrase justice. **Munditiis** points to scrupulous attention to the toilette; **simplex** to its severe simplicity. W. M.

³ The **flava coma** was, on account of its rarity, a mark of distinction; it may be even an indication of high birth, as Horace, with a touch of irony, suggests:

nescias an te generum beati
 Phyllidis flavæ decorent parentes.—il. 4. 13.

Then she descends from her chamber to the **gratum antrum**—not ‘some pleasant cave’, as Milton has it, but the pleasant grotto attached to a lordly house. It is a cool and shady nook with its statues of Venus, its fountain and its ferns. **Gratum** it is in itself, but yet more for its sweet associations, in the wooer’s mind, with blissful meetings. Here often of late has he been received.

Now the two, youth and maiden, stand before us.

The figure of the youthful lover is a counterfoil to that of **Pyrrha**. She is attired with absolute simplicity, his preparation has been elaborate.

He is an elegant youth—**gracilis puer**—one of the ‘curled darlings’ of the period; his locks are all too profusely besprinkled with perfume. He has brought with him, too, his bouquet of thick clustering roses,¹ sweet allies to his pleading. So, ‘**credulus**,’ with no thought of rivals, he presses his suit, ‘**te urget**’; with no thought of those others who before him had urged their love-plea, or of those who may come after him.

He woos, and wins; so he deems: **qui nunc te fruitur credulus aurea**.

What the beauty may be to others he neither knows nor cares. To him all is golden—**aurea**—her smiles, his joy.

Yes, and as it is now, so shall it always be; to joy is added hope. **Fruitur** is followed by **sperat**, **nunc** by **semper**. The future shall be as golden as the present; he shall ever find her fancy-free: **vacuam**—ever gracious: **amabilem**.

All this the poet, after his manner, turns into imagery.

He sees the lover in a frail boat upon the smiling water, the ‘many-twinkling smile’ of water rippling in the bright sunshine.

Ah! poor fool! **credulus**, **insolens**—inexperienced in the ways of fickle beauties. How often shall he who now is drunk with joy have cause to weep! Alas! there follows **flebit** upon **fruitur**. A change shall come over the scene: (**mutatam**) **fidem**, **mutatos deos**. That plighted troth in which he had trusted shall be broken, those gods that smiled upon their vows shall frown.

Vain the appeal to heaven. The whole scene is stricken with change. The breath of soft zephyrs has given place to angry winds; the heavens are black, the roughened waters surge.

Alas! false beauty! Hapless wretch upon whom that beauty all untested gleamed!

¹ Or the phrase **multa in rosa** may refer to the garland which he wears:

rosa
canos odorati capillos.—ii. 11. 14.

VERSES 13^B-16:

Then the poet himself: 'I speak, for I am one who knows. I too embarked upon that self-same sea and well nigh perished.¹ Go, visit Neptune's fane and read the votive tablet² hung within upon the sacred wall, the record of my own narrow escape from death; how I myself, just rescued from the yawning seas, have there hung up my dank and dripping garments, a grateful offering to the god who sways the deep. His pity saved me.'

¹ At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
 I saw the snare, and I retired:
 The daughter of a hundred Earls,
 You are not one to be desired.

* * * * *

You sought to prove how I could love,
 And my disdain is my reply.
 The lion on your old stone gates
 Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere.

² Then, when I shall myselfe in safety see,
 A table, for eternall monument
 Of thy great grace and my great jeoparddee,
 Great Neptune, I avow to hallow unto thee!

The Faerie Queene.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. I CAR. IX

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LIB. I CAR. IX

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte, nec iam sustineant onus
silvae laborantes, geluque
flumina constiterint acuto.

dissolve frigus ligna super foco 5
large reponens atque benignius
deprome quadrimum Sabina,
o Thaliarche, merum diota :

permitte divis cetera, qui simul
stravere ventos aequore fervido 10
deproeliantes, nec cupressi
nec veteres agitantur orni.

quid sit futurum cras fuge quaerere et
quem Fors dierum cumque dabit lucro
appone, nec dulces amores 15
sperne puer neque tu choreas,

donec virenti canities abest
morosa. nunc et campus et areae
lenesque sub noctem susurri
composita repetantur hora, 20

nunc et latentis proditor intimo
gratus puellae risus ab angulo
pignusque dereptum lacertis
aut digito male pertinaci.

BOOK I ODE IX

THE JOYS OF THE SEASONS

ὅναι μὲν ὁ Ζεὺς, ἐκ δ' ὀράνω μέγας
 χεῖμων, πεπάγασιν δ' ὑδάτων ῥόαι.
 κάββαλλε τὸν χεῖμων', ἐπὶ μὲν τίθει
 πῦρ, ἐν δὲ κίρναις οἶνον ἀφειδέως
 μέλιχρον, αὐτὰρ ἄμφι κόρσῳ
 μάλθακον ἀμφιτίθῃ γνόφαλλον.—ALCAEUS.

This ode, like the fourth in this book, sounds the familiar Horatian note of *carpe diem*. It runs through all the octave from depth of Winter to height of Summer, from January to June. 'Be the season what it may, seize its joys, my friend.'

VERSES I-4 :

The first stanza describes a Winter-scene at Rome ; clear, bright, keen Winter is vividly pictured.

Vides : an imperative passed at once into the indicative ; a call to gaze obeyed as soon as heard.

'See—ah, yes, thou seest—see how, glistening white in deep, fresh-fallen snow, **Soracte**¹ stands,' clear cut against the sky.

What a note of stillness **stet** imparts to the whole scene ! the bright stillness of clear frost.

Then, passing down from the sharp-outlined, conspicuous mountain, the eye descends to the woods that clothe its sides and base : **silvae laborantes**. They too are white ; hidden beneath the white pall, nay, the white burden, of snow—a burden which strains the strong limbs of the forest trees ; a burden which they cannot always bear. And so, now and again, the silence is broken and a crash of breaking boughs is heard in the still air.

Still lower the eye catches the glint of the frozen river, which, **flumen** though it is, yet stands ; still, like the rest ; still as yonder mountain, for the murmur and ripple, aye, and the rush of the stream are hushed in the grip of the frost.

It is stern Winter's reign as seen from windows looking north from Rome.

¹ A mountain of Etruria, 2,420 feet high. It is separated from the main range of the Apennines by the valley of the Tiber, and standing thus apart it is a conspicuous figure in the landscape as seen from Rome, twenty-six miles distant.

VERSES 5-8:

The second stanza pictures the interior. The *gaudet igni* of the ploughman in Ode IV is reproduced, and applied to the Poet's friend in the city. Winter has its joys—joys of indoors. There, at any rate, one may cry, '*Solvitur*,' ere ever the Spring appear.

Dissolve frigus! 'Thaw the cold,' cries the poet, 'heap high the logs on the hearth ;¹ let us be warm at home, and we can smile at Winter's stern rule without.

'Be generous, be bountiful, my friend. Thou hast faggots by thee in plenty ; pile them on the fire and make a merry blaze.

'Yea, and there is good wine in thy cellars, mellowed for four years past in thy great Sabine² jars. Bring it forth, and with no niggard hand : **benignius**.

'Tis glowing warmth we want about us, and within. Let this be our answer to the snow and the frost and the keen nipping air.' **Dissolve frigus!**

VERSES 9-12:

The third stanza appears to point to coming change in the season. To still keen frost succeed storms and the wild bluster of winds. Winter gone, there come the gales of the Spring equinox. The reign of frost is past, and wild winds, rushing forth from their hiding-place, lash the air into storm, and wage fierce war with the seething waters. The atmosphere, lately so still, is in tempest now ; the waters, once quiet as death in the grip of the frost, are raging now.

So things change, seasons succeed one another, time hurries on. Live, then, my friend, while you may! Away with vain cares! Take the joys that offer! Let Heaven see to the rest : **permitte divis cetera**. Enjoy the present, be it Winter, Spring, or Summer. Yea, for 'tis Heaven that carries forward the vicissitudes of the seasons and shall lift the year from January to June.

So these desolating storms shall likewise pass. The lashed air shall once more be still, no longer with Winter's stillness of death, but with Summer's calm of happy life ; not the silent snow-burdened trees, but the solemn cypress shall stand

¹ **foco**] '*totius domus communis, ad quem, sarmentis et lignis large impositis, quicumque convivarum algebat, accedens calefacere se poterat ; qui mos etiam nunc servatur in Italia.*'—ORELLI.

² The wine which Horace himself drank and which he provided for his friends :

vile potabis modicis Sabinum
cantharis, Graeca quod ego ipse testa
conditum levi . . . Maecenas.—i. 20. 1.

sentry in the still air, and the green ash, slow to open those black, close-shut buds, shall be in leaf at last ; not a leaf shall stir in the sweet summer air.

VERSES 13-24 :

'Nay, then, be happy while you may. *Carpe diem*: seize the day as it comes.

'Let the future bear what it may in its womb,¹ to-day is thine.

'Cease to ask what the morrow shall bring forth. Whatever good thing happy chance shall bring thee to-day, put that to thine account as clear gain : *appone lucro*.²

'Thou art still young, my friend, take then youth's joys. The white has not yet touched thy locks ; keep surly moroseness till it shall. But now sweet love awaits thy wooing—love and the dance. Spurn them not. Make them thine own now, while thy life is in its prime—while the year is in its prime.'

Again we hear the emphatic call—*nunc*—now, while you may.

Here at Rome each day, each hour brings its own call to delight.

'In the morning, the Campus shall brace thy muscles and strengthen thy manhood. There, athlete and soldier ply their drill in the fresh morning hours.

'When noon is past, let pleasure-ground and park tempt thy leisure, where loungers saunter in the winding paths and chance acquaintance spend an idle hour.

'But when the evening shadows fall there comes the sweetest hour of all. Sweeter far than the loud laugh and idle banter are the whispers soft and low that await thee as the twilight deepens : *lenesque sub noctem susurri*.

'It is the lovers' chosen hour. Seek out thy beloved then, and if she meet thee not at thy trysting-place, then, quick, betake thee to her door.

'See, it stands ajar. Call her, call her ; call her by name, soft and low, in the voice she knows and loves.

¹ *quid sit futurum cras*]

ille potens sui

laetusque deget, cui licet in diem
dixisse 'vixi : cras vel atra
nube polum Pater occupato
vel sole puro ; non tamen irritum,
quodcumque retro est, efficiet neque
diffinget infectumque reddet,
quod fugiens semel hora vexit.'—iii. 29. 41.

² Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go.

OMAR KHAYYAM.

30 INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

'What! no response? Nay, call again, the wilful child is hiding. 'Tis but her mischief.

'Ah, hark! A tell-tale laugh betrays her hiding-place. There! in the dim nook by the threshold.

'Rush in! Snatch from her arm, from her finger, be it bracelet or ring, thy love-token: **pignus**. See, she but affects to hold it fast; her struggle is a sweet pretence: **digito male pertinaci**. She means it for thee.'

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. I CAR. XIV

LIB. I CAR. XIV

O navis, referent in mare te novi
fluctus! o quid agis? fortiter occupa
portum! nonne vides ut
nudum remigio latus,

et malus celeri saucius Africo, 5
antennaeque gemant, ac sine funibus
vix durare carinae
possint imperiosius

aequor? non tibi sunt integra lintea,
non di quos iterum pressa voces malo. 10
quamvis Pontica pinus,
silvae filia nobilis,

iactes et genus et nomen inutile,
nil pictis timidus navita puppibus
fidit. tu, nisi ventis 15
debes ludibrium, cave.

nuper sollicitum quae mihi taedium,
nunc desiderium curaque non levis,
interfusa nitentes
vites aequora Cycladas. 20

BOOK I ODE XIV

RESPUBLICA ROMANA

ἀσυνέτημι τῶν ἀνέμων στάσιν·
 τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἔνθεν κύμα κυλίνδεται,
 τὸ δ' ἔνθεν· ἄμμες δ' ἂν τὸ μέσσον
 νῆϊ φορήμεθα σὺν μελαίῃα,
 χείμωνι μοχθεῦντες μεγάλην μάλα·
 περ μὲν γὰρ ἄντλος ἱστοπέδαν ἔχει,
 λαΐφος δὲ πᾶν ζάδηλον ἦδη
 καὶ λάκιδες μέγαλαι κατ' αὐτο·
 χόλαισι δ' ἄγκυραι . . .

ALCAEUS.

It is almost universally agreed that this ode is a political allegory, with a general consensus of opinion that the security of the sheltering haven represents the established peace of the Augustan rule; but the precise significance of 'the ship', which is addressed as a living personality, is differently interpreted.

Such difficulties of precise interpretation led Bentley and others to discard the idea of allegory altogether, to understand the reference to be to the actual ship which brought Horace from Philippi after the failure of the Republican enterprise under Brutus and Cassius, and to treat the poem as a dissuasive to some of his friends who proposed to re-embark in the same vessel.

But the great majority of critics have reverted to the view of Quintilian, who uses this very ode as his illustration of the meaning of allegory. His view, and that advanced still later by Acron and strongly supported by Buttmann, was that by 'the ship' is signified the entire Republic, their opinion being based on the fact that the ode is plainly an imitation of an extant song of Alcaeus¹ who, using the same figure of a ship, applies it to the political troubles of Mytilene. Moreover, it is a familiar commonplace of poets, in our own as in other languages, to compare the state to a ship.

The other interpretation is suggested by the warm personal feeling which characterizes the appeal—to the ship, as to a vessel in which Horace himself had formerly

¹ The fragment which stands at the head of this section.

barely escaped with his life, and to the crew, as former comrades of his own. This warmth of personal feeling rather suggests, what seems in itself highly probable, that the ode is addressed to a remnant of the old Brutus¹ party to which Horace had belonged, when they were disposed to join Sextus Pompeius in his last effort for the Republican cause. The reference to Pontus in **Pontica pinus** and the **genus et nomen inutile** confirm this application, by recalling the great Pompeius whose signal distinction was won in Pontus as the conqueror of Mithridates. And the whole tone of the poem agrees perfectly with the retrospective references which Horace makes to his former connexion with the Brutus party. This is especially true of the last stanza :

**nuper sollicitum quae mihi taedium,
nunc desiderium curaque non levis.**

It should be noted that we have no fixed date for the ode to guide our decision.

VERSES 1-3^A :

Apart from precise application to the political circumstances of the time, the poem is relevant to every case, whether individual or national, of escape from imminent peril and subsequent temptation to make a new venture.

But what the politician or the moralist would shape into formal counsel, the allegorist, who is also a poet, casts in the mould of imaginative creation ; and so here again it is vivid picture that meets us.

The first word sets the note to all five stanzas and imbues them all with passionate feeling : **o navis**.

The poet apostrophizes the state or a party in the state, 'O ship, freighted with our fortunes !' and instantly we see her, all but a wreck, labouring there in the offing, just outside the bar.

Just escaped, as she is, with bare life, there is risk of her being swept out to sea again and into the tossing waters from which she has so narrowly been saved.

She is making, Oh ! how slowly, for the shelter of the port ; the safe haven is almost reached.

But ah, see ! the current begins again to set seawards ; the wind has shifted and risen. Rolling waves, storm-driven, threaten to drive her back into the perilous open waters :

referent in mare te novi

fluctus.

There is a warmth in the protest that suggests that

¹ Cf. ii. 7. 1-16.

Horace himself had once shared in the peril. In an agony of apprehension he cries, 'Oh! bethink thee. What dost thou in thy madness? **O quid agis?**

'Nay, in heaven's name, make for the haven: **fortiter occupa portum!** 'Tis madness to venture out to sea again.'

VERSES 3^B-16:

'See, thy broadside swept of its oarage! thy mast shattered in the rush of that fierce gale from the south! Hark, how thy yards strain and groan! **Nonne vides?**

'Oh! blind in thy madness. See, thy keel-timbers have started! The seas rush in; scarcely with stout ropes lashed round, keel undergirded,' shalt thou live in these waters. Ever more threatening, they claim thee for their own. Thou canst never endure. **Nonne vides?**

'See, thy sails are in ribbons, torn to shreds by the gale! Thine imaged gods, niched in thy stern, thy trust in dangers, yet now invoked in vain, see, they are gone, swept away by the inrushing seas! **Nonne vides?**

'Nought is left but that poor hull of thine, built of stout Pontic pine, 'tis true! Ah, yes, shade of great Pompey! sprung from a forest illustrious.

'Aye, but what shall it serve thee to vaunt of name and race? Neither shall save thee.

'And thy painted poop!² Does cautious mariner trust to gay colours?

'Nay, **cave, cave!** Oh, beware, beware! There's just time—just time for safety; unless, may heaven forbid! thou art destined to perish—**debes**—no match for wild wind and wave, but their sport, their mock and plaything: **ludibrium**.

'Oh, take heed, take thou heed!'

VERSES 17-20:

'It was but lately I shared in thy peril. The woe and the weariness of those days haunt me still.

'I love thee, brave bark; and ye, stout crew, was I not one of you? But love and regret blend with anxious solicitude now.³

'Oh, then, I beseech thee, take heed lest the breakers dash

¹ **sine funibus**] βοηθείαις ἐχρῶντο, ὑποζωννύντες τὸ πλοῖον.—Acts xxvii. 17.

² **pictis puppibus**] οὐ γὰρ Κυκλάπεσσι νέες πάρα μυλοπάρηοι.

HOMER, Od. ix. 125.

³ **taedium... desiderium**] 'post cladem Philippensem **taedium**, aegritudo cum satietate militiae ac rerum civilium me ceperat' (multa enim perverse et imperite in partibus Brutinis gesta erant), 'nunc, cum salus tua denuo agitur, magnam mihi curam incis ac **desiderium**.'—ORELLI.

thee on the rocky shore! Methinks I see those gleaming cliffs, shining needles of rock, and those treacherous waters that run in and out among them. These shun or thou shalt perish.’¹

¹ Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!

Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith, triumphant o’er our fears,
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!

LONGFELLOW.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. I CAR. XXII

LIB. I CAR. XXII

Integer vitae scelerisque purus
non eget Mauris iaculis neque arcu
nec venenatis gravida sagittis,
Fusce, pharetra,

sive per Syrtes iter aestuosas 5
sive facturus per inhospitalem
Caucasum vel quae loca fabulosus
lambit Hydaspes.

namque me silva lupus in Sabina,
dum meam canto Lalagen et ultra 10
terminum curis vagor expeditis,
fugit inermem,

quale portentum neque militaris
Daunias latis alit aesculetis
nec Iubae tellus generat, leonum 15
arida nutrix.

pone me pigris ubi nulla campis
arbor aestiva recreatur aura,
quod latus mundi nebulae malusque
Iuppiter urget ; 20

pone sub curru nimium propinqui
solis in terra domibus negata :
dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
dulce loquentem.

BOOK I ODE XXII

INTEGRITY

'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity :
She that has that is clad in complete steel,
And, like a quiver'd nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds,
Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandit or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity.

Comus.

Horace appears here as a moral teacher, yet without divesting himself of the character of a true poet.

He treats of a grave subject, and the ground-tone of the poem echoes a deep and noble principle ; but he handles it half playfully, as with a fine touch of humour he illustrates it by an incident in his own life.

But how great is the theme, and how simply and nobly it is stated in the first stanza ! Purity and wholeness of life, 'integrity,' make a man invulnerable, and enable him to be happy and free-hearted ; such an one, it is implied, should a true poet be.

VERSES 1-4 :

The first line touches sublimity with its terse, simple delineation of character.

Integer vitae graphically describes for us the man whose life is of one piece, a flawless whole. We have almost narrowed down the meaning of 'integrity' to honest dealing, but the word implies that it is indeed truth that binds character together.

Isaiah's ideal Ruler has a 'girdle of righteousness', and St. Paul's ideal warrior is 'girt about with truth'. In like wise Horace's ideal man is one whose life has suffered no fracture : **integer vitae**.

Then the second phrase perfects the picture, adding

¹ Aristius Fuscus, to whom this ode, as also Epistle i. 10, is addressed, appears to have been a man of literary pursuits and a noted grammarian. He was an intimate (Sat. i. 9. 61) and congenial friend of Horace, who held his judgement in great respect (Sat. i. 10. 83). Their accord was perfect, save that while Horace preferred the life of the country Fuscus enjoyed that of the city (Ep. i. 10. 1, 2).

'stainless' to 'flawless': *scelerisque purus*. 'Wholeness, etymologically considered, conducts to 'holiness', and, by way of the Greek root *καλ-ός*, to beauty also—ideas which are combined in the marvellous phrase, 'the beauty of holiness.'

Then follows the assertion that such a character is inviolable and invulnerable. It needs no 'carnal' weapons; it is itself its own protection.

Just as beautiful Pyrrha unadorned is adorned the most, so here Virtue unarmed is armed complete. She wears St. Paul's spiritual panoply, 'the whole armour of God.'

Horace, as poet, assumes that purity and integrity of soul give a charmed life to the body, and so he exalts these virtues by exhibiting their independence of the arms which men otherwise need.

These he pictures:

This man needs no javelins such as the Moors use in the African wilds, no bow swung at his side, no quiver heavy with its burden of poison-dipt arrows. The *integritas vitae* of the soul is depicted as equally true of the natural life of the body.

VERSES 5-8:

In the second stanza, we have the man thus unarmed and needing no arms, exposed to danger.

The statuesque presentment of character in the first stanza is exchanged here for movement. Let him travel—*facturus iter*—whither and where he will, still is he invulnerable.

We see him in perilous places—each with its own distinctive image of terror, graphic as ever—a traveller by sea and land. Definite pictures of travel in known places, such as the African Syrtes and the Asiatic Caucasus, are followed by a plunge into the unknown, the weird regions of the mythic East.

So then we see this traveller, his vessel making its way through the boiling surf, over sunken reefs, beneath a blazing sky.

And again, as usual, there is the counter-picture. We see him plunged into the wild desert ravines and passes of the frosty Caucasus where no man dwells, the *ἀπάνθρωπον πάγον* of Aeschylus.

Then let him even pass the bounds of the known world to lands of myth and fable, strange regions lapped by the slow oozy flow of the mythic Indian river.¹ Still is he safe.

¹ *Hydaspes*] 'nomen corruptum ex Indico Vitastâ, "emissa," est Indiae fluvius (hod. Behut), usque ad quem Alexander M. penetrarat. De eo multa fabulosa a poetis narrabantur, veluti auriferum gemmiferumque esse, praesertim in Dionysiâcis; et tota India portentorum plena.'—ORELLI.

Nothing can hurt the man whose life is whole—*integer vitae*; whose soul is unstained by guilt—*scelerisque purus*.

VERSES 9-16:

Here a sudden, unexpected turn occurs in the poem. It is as though the burden of the great thought was too heavy and he sought to fling it off in a quick, playful reference to himself.

We see Horace in a free happy hour, far from busy Rome with its tumult and clamour, where he loved to be, in the quiet country, at his farm among the Sabine hills.

He is wandering alone, unarmed, singing his happy love; 'tis '*Lalage*,' my own *Lalage*'.

Heedless and happy he strays past the bounds of his farm into the woods beyond—*ultra terminum*—free-hearted, cares thrown to the winds, singing ever *Lalage*, his love.

Then a stir among the trees, a rustling of leaves, a crackling of branches, a rush from the thicket, and there faces him the glare of fierce red eyes and glistening fangs. It is a wolf from the forest which faces him for one brief instant—faces and flees from him, unarmed as he is.

Heaven's charm is upon him; nought can hurt a poet's consecrated life.

The fourth stanza playfully magnifies the danger, exaggerating the size and fierceness of the creature, and in so doing paying by implication a subtle compliment to the poet's native Apulia, *Daunias militaris*, 'mother of a hardy race of soldiers.'

So deadly a monster did not warlike *Daunia* ever breed in her great oak-forests—a phrase suggestive of the fierce wild boar. Nay (in a further flight of exaggerative imagination), even *Juba's* land, the African sand-waste, home of the lion, did never produce such a portent.

VERSES 17-24:

Then stanza five, based upon the incident of the wolf, exalts to the utmost the charmed life he bore as poet and lover, *integer vitae scelerisque purus*.

'Put me where you will,'² he cries, 'still shall I live and

¹ *Lalage*] λαλαγή = prattle, from λαλαγέω.

² *pone . . . negata*]

quinque tenent caelum zonae; quarum una corusco
semper sole rubens et torrida semper ab igni;
quam circum extremae dextra laevaue trahuntur
caeruleae, glacie concretæ atque imbris atris;
has inter mediamque duæ mortalibus aegris
munere concessæ divom, et via secta per ambas,
obliquus qua se signorum verteret ordo.

VIRGIL, *Geor.* i. 233-9.

love. Where other men cannot survive there can he dwell and live a blessed life.

He presents this claim in two pictures set side by side ; the one depicts the frigid, the other the torrid zone.

We see the ice-bound plain where no tree bursts into leaf at breath of summer air, a land of sullen mist and sleety rain, the sunless side of the great world.

Or we behold the other side where the sun beats fiercely down, his glowing car close to the burning plains, where no man can make his home.

'Be my lot cast in either yet shall I both live and love ; still my heart shall see, sweetly smiling, still shall hear, sweetly prattling, **Lalage**, my love.'

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. I CAR. XXIV

LIB. I CAR. XXIV

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
tam cari capitis? praecipe lugubres
cantus, Melpomene, cui liquidam pater
vocem cum cithara dedit.

ergo Quintilium perpetuus sopor 5
urget! cui Pudor et Iustitiae soror,
incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas
quando ullum inveniet parem?

multis ille bonis flebilis occidit,
nulli flebilior quam tibi, Vergili. 10
tu frustra pius heu non ita creditum
poscis Quintilium deos.

quid si Threicio blandius Orpheo
auditam moderere arboribus fidem,
num vanae redeat sanguis imagini, 15
quam virga semel horrida,

non lenis precibus fata recludere,
nigro compulerit Mercurius gregi?
durum: sed levius fit patientia
quidquid corrigere est nefas. 20

BOOK I ODE XXIV

AN ELEGY

Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas?

MILTON.

This ode exhibits Horace as a sympathizing friend, and, in the closing lines, as a wise and tender counsellor. Its first three stanzas are an expression, full and sweet, of that grief which is at once the shadow of loss and the measure of love for the dead. Through the whole ode there trembles a certain sense of awe at the mystery of it all, yet with a tacit relegation of that mystery to the Heavenly Powers that have ordained it. The under-note is that of Virgil's own *dis aliter visum*,¹ and the ode closes with a gentle monition to humble patient submission.

VERSES 1-4:

The first line expresses, in the form of a question, the full note of sympathy with Virgil's grief. It had been a grief apparently unrestrained, almost excessive. To some it would seem to have violated **pudor** (shame) and to have exceeded **modus** (limit)—**pudor**, that sensitive regard to the better judgement of others which is the *αἰδώς* of the Greeks; and **modus**, that limit and measure of what they deemed fitting which is implied in the phrase *μηδὲν ἄγαν*.

But this is their judgement because they have never loved as Virgil loved with a love that is a painful longing—**desiderium**—as for one who could not be spared from the life of his friend.

So Horace, in sympathy, catches the tone and cries, as though fronting such censors, 'Who shall set measure or limit to our yearning for one so dear?' **tam cari capitis**. And so he mourns, pouring out his heart; mourns, as a poet must, as Tennyson does in 'In Memoriam', in song.

And to sing worthily he must look up. It is the Heavenly Muse that must indite his song—**praecipe**—and set for him his lyric strain. And so he appeals to the Greek **Melpomene**,

¹ Aen. ii. 428.

sweet singer of the choir divine, daughter of the Father Supreme, to whom it was that Father's gift to wed to the lyric strain her own sweet, liquid tones: *liquidam vocem cum cithara*.

To our ears the appeal to the Muses sounds conventional, but it was real once, and Horace listens and repeats, echoing the divine one's plaintive melody given in answer to his prayer; *lugubres cantus praecipe*—'Music attuned to mourning teach thou me'.

VERSES 5-8:

Stanza two is an exalted eulogy on the departed friend, *Quintilius*.¹

Ergo expresses reluctant surprise. Can it be that he is dead and gone when so many triflers live, who, as Dante puts it in scorn, 'eat and drink and put on clothes'?

The poet breaks the harshness of the blow and softens death into a sleep; yet a sleep, alas! with no hope of an awakening. It is *perpetuus sopor*,² eternal slumber, that holds him fast—fast asleep for ever now!

Then follows the eulogy of the dead—a eulogy not of deeds but of character, that from which deeds flow.

The rendering is indirect. The noble Virtues are personified and represented as though they sought in vain a soul as noble as that which is gone in which to make their home.

They are all of the severer cast: *Pudor*, again the *Αἰδώς* of the Greeks, sensitive Honour,—shame to do aught that should violate it. Then, *incorrupta Fides*, Faith incorrupt; Faith that no bribe can buy and break, twin sister of imperial Justice. Next *nuda Veritas*,³ Truth unveiled, the Greek *ἀλήθεια* (*a*, *λήθω* = nought concealed), how rare a virtue in the words and ways of men!

These heavenly visitants of earth have lost from the throng of human lives a life akin to their own, a peerless soul. When—*quando*—oh, when shall they ever light upon his peer?

VERSES 9-18:

Then, in stanza three, there is the descent from the

¹ *Quintilius Varus* of Cremona 'Vergilii et Horatii familiaris' to whom Ode i. 18 seems to have been addressed.

² *soles occidere et redire possunt:
nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
nox est perpetua una dormienda.*—CATULLUS v. 4.

So man lieth down and riseth not:
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor be roused out of their sleep.—JOB xiv. 12.

³ 'quae nihil occulti habeat ut egeat tegumento.'—ACRON, Schol.

divine to human appreciation. 'He died by many good men wept, nor were any tears more full of grief than thine, O Virgil.

'So far, this is well. Weep thou thy fill.

'Yet bethink thee, friend. Dost thou not carry pious reverence for thy friend too far? And vain, because too large, is the petition which thou urgest. **Quintilius** was not thine own that thou shouldst ask him back from the gods who now have reclaimed him. It was by their grace that thou wast trusted, for a space, with such a life; but not on terms of absolute possession: **non ita creditum**.¹

'Nay, 'tis vain for thee to seek the return of thy departed from the dark realm where now he leads a shadowy life.

'Poet art thou, O Virgil, yet thy music hath no power to bring the warm life-blood to the phantom form of thy sweet friend.

'Wert thou **Orpheus**'² self, who with his magic lyre charmed the listening trees to leave their rooted bed and follow him, 'twould still be vain.

'Pious art thou and beloved of Heaven, yet here thy pious prayers may not prevail to force back those gates which Fate has closed upon thy friend. He is now one of that dusky flock which **Hermes** shepherds with his ghostly wand.'

VERSES 19, 20:

'Ah, yes! 'tis hard: **durum**.

'Yet patience!³ humble patience. This shall lighten for thee that load of sorrow which it were sin to strive to cast away.'

¹ **creditum . . . deos**] Mr. Medley interprets vv. 11, 12 in the sense that **Quintilius** had been entrusted (lent) to Virgil by the gods who have now reclaimed their own. A more commonly accepted meaning is that, '**frustra pius**,' Virgil had entrusted (commended) **Quintilius** to the gods who had interpreted the trust otherwise than Virgil had intended (cf. Orelli, Wickham, Page). Both interpretations yield interesting results, but the latter seems to give a more definite meaning to the words **frustra pius**, and the agent in entrusting and asking appears to be the same.

² unde vocalem temere insecutae
Orphea silvae
arte materna rapidos morantem
fluminum lapsus celeresque ventos,
blandum et auritas fidibus canoris
ducere quercus?—Ode i. 12. 7-12.

³ De murmurer contre elle (la mort), et perdre patience,
Il est mal à propos;
Vouloir ce que Dieu veut, est la seule science,
Qui nous met en repos.—MALHERBE.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB I CAR. XXXIV

LIB. I CAR. XXXIV

Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens
insanientis dum sapientiae
consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
vela dare atque iterare cursus

cogor relictos : namque Diespiter, 5
igni corusco nubila dividens
plerumque, per purum tonantes
egit equos volucremque currum,

quo bruta tellus et vaga flumina,
quo Styx et invisi horrida Taenari 10
sedes Atlanteusque finis
concutitur. valet ima summis

mutare et insignem attenuat deus,
obscura promens ; hinc apicem rapax
Fortuna cum stridore acuto 15
sustulit, hic posuisse gaudet.

BOOK I ODE XXXIV

CONVERSION

ἐγένετο δέ μοι πορευομένη . . . περὶ μεσημβρίαν ἐξαίφνης ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ
περιαστράφει φῶς ἱκανὸν περὶ ἐμέ, ἔπεσόν τε εἰς τὸ ἔδαφος.—Acts xxii. 6, 7.

In this ode Horace touches lightly the two counter positions of Epicurean and Stoic. Himself a convinced disciple of neither school, he yet, in all his writings, exhibits a basis of belief in a moral order and government of the world, the noblest element in the Stoic creed. But as his mood changes, or experience shifts its phases, he inclines now to the one and again to the other opposing doctrine. Here, as most commonly, he reflects incisively on the shallow naturalism of those who ignore the divine interposition in human affairs.

The central point of the ode is found in the startling incident recorded in stanza two—the crash of thunder following the lightning-flash out of a clear sky; a bolt from the blue. This is the prodigy which, finding no place in the rationalistic explanation of nature,¹ startles the careless Epicurean whom he here represents in his own person, from his idle, nominal acknowledgement of the gods, and flings him back into his old track of superstitious reverence. Thus aroused he casts his eye over the stirring scenes in the great world of human life, noting especially those startling changes in the lot of conspicuous men which have ever seemed to evidence supernatural interposition. He who reigns supreme in the universe 'hath put down princes from their thrones, and hath exalted them of low degree'.

VERSES 1-5^A:

Picturesque as ever, he gives in the first line an etched outline of the nominal worshipper, the man whose outer shell of observance has no heart of reverence or belief. He is **cultor deorum**; convention and policy impel him to assume

¹ The challenge of Lucretius is:

denique cur numquam caelo iacit undique puro
Iuppiter in terras fulmen sonitusque profundit?
an simul ac nubes successere, ipse in eas tum
descendit, prope ut hinc teli determinet ictus?—vi. 400.

this guise; but he is *parcus*, a niggard in his offerings, and *infrequens*, rare in his appearance at the temple festivals. His religion, as it is worth nothing, shall cost him nothing either in time or money.

He is a man of the world and he bears in the world a repute for wisdom; nay, he is not only *sapiens*, a wise man, but *sapientiae consultus*,¹ a trusted guide to other men.

But now, in the light of that abnormal flash this life of his stands revealed in its true character

This guide to others is himself blind; he is a wanderer, astray; for *erro* is the graphic verdict which he pronounces on himself. He is that 'fool' who had 'said in his heart, There is no God'.

The wisdom, too, of which he was an acknowledged professor, is folly—*sapientiae insanientis*—a poor wisdom without sanity of soul. Verily, 'the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.'

Thus self-convicted as a wanderer from the safe track on the sea of life, he must now shift his sail and make what speed he may on the course which, in his presumptuous folly, he had forsaken.

A great fear is upon him: *cogor*; compulsion urges. He is crowding all sail—*vela dare*—making for the old safe ways, ere, it may be, a lightning-bolt strike him, and it be too late.

Thus often is a man driven to seek refuge, under the stress of life, in his childhood's faith. To be wise he must, to the eye of the world, become a fool. The shining goal of the Kingdom of Heaven is sought and found in the simplicity and faith of a little child.

VERSES 5^B-12^A:

In the second stanza the scene is pictured wherein the sign from heaven appeared.

The implied foil to the picture is supplied by the Lucretian doctrine, and especially the lines to which reference has been made. In this doctrine natural causes fill the place of God, and with no atom of insight into what that great word 'nature'² means. The arrogant dictum is, that it is impossible there should be the thunder and the lightning-flash apart from riven thunder-clouds. The science of the thing is clear.

¹ Cf. *iuris consultus*:

iuris atque eloquentiae consultus.—LIV. x. 22.

² What I call God,

And fools call Nature.

BROWNING, *The Ring and the Book*, x. 1073.

But see, here is a day serene ; the sky is clear, *purum* ; no veil of cloud dims the blue vault of heaven.

Then suddenly the crash from that pure sky, and the flame cleaves the air.¹ A marvel this to make an unbeliever tremble! Ah! this is not as it is wont to be (*plerumque* is emphatic) when low clouds have gathered and heaped up their dark, livid masses in the hush of the gathering storm. Then the hot, brooding stillness is broken abruptly by the rush of air and by the 'burst', as the leaping, writhing flame—*igni corusco*—tears asunder the massed clouds.

But now to this trembling soul the thunder storm out of a clear sky is a veritable theophany :

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters :

The God of Glory thundereth,

Even the Lord upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful ;

The voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord cleaveth the flames of fire.

It is Jehovah Himself who speaks ; the thunder is His voice.

Instinctively Horace reverts to the archaic form : *Diespiter*. That roll of thunder is the thud of his horses' hoofs—Jove's coursers—as they beat the trembling earth ; that flash is the gleam of his flying car.

To the poet's quickened sense the whole world re-echoes the peal. The dull earth—*bruta tellus*—quivers with the shock as though endowed with nerves. The wandering streams flee but cannot escape ; the hateful river of Hades itself is thrilled through its black turbid flood, and the horror-breathing realms that lie beyond the dark cave of *Taenarum*²

¹ per purum tonantes]

namque improvise vibratus ab aethere fulgor
cum sonitu venit, et ruere omnia visa repente,
Tyrrhenusque tubae mugire per aethera clangor
suspiciunt ; iterum atque iterum fragor increpat ingens.
arma inter nubem caeli regione serena
per sudum rutilare vident et pulsa tonare.
obstipuerunt animis alii ; sed Troius heros
adgnovit sonitum et divinae promissa parentis.

Aen. viii. 524-31.

Ζεὺ πάτερ, ὅς τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν ἀνάσσεις,
ἧ μεγάλ' ἐβρόντησας ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος,
οὐδέ ποθι νέφος ἐστί· τέρας νύ τεψ τόδε φαίνεις.

HOMER, Od. xx. 112.

² Cape Matapan, where there is a cavern in the cliffs which was regarded as the entrance to Hades :

Taenarias etiam fauces, alta ostia Ditis.

VIRGIL, Geor. iv. 467.

are moved. Yea, to earth's utmost limit, where old **Atlas** bounds the world,¹ the shock is felt.

VERSES 12^B—16:

Deus valet—God reigns.

That **valet** is emphatic. The power that rules in nature and in the world of human life, is God. This is the true account of those sudden changes² in the lot of men which startle the world, and which no second causes can explain.

The low are raised to heights supreme; the high cast down into the depths. Of those who shone conspicuous in the eyes of men as bright heavenly orbs, the Heavenly Ruler makes the light to wane and die: **insignem attenuat**; while those who dwelt unnoted in mean obscurity are brought forth and made to shine as the stars in the world's view: **obscura promens**.

Aye, this is the just account of that strange drama now enacting in the East, where the Parthian throne passes from one usurper to another.

Men in their folly deem these changes to be but the chance work of Fortune who, like the eagle in the old Tarquinian legend, snatches with shrill scream the crown from the head of one to place it exultant on the brows of another.

But no! 'tis no idle chance. 'Fortune' is but an idle name that veils the God who works and reigns: **valet mutare deus**.

¹ quo . . . **finis**] all creation. Another picture is:

terram inertem, . . . mare . . .
ventosum, et urbes regnaque tristia
divosque mortalesque turbas.—iii. 4. 45-47.

² He setteth up on high those that be low;

And those which mourn are exalted to safety.—Job v. 11.

The poet expresses his own philosophic calm amidst the mutations of fortune thus:

Fortuna . . .
transmutat incertos honores,
nunc mihi, nunc alii benigna.
laudo manentem; si celeres quatit
pennas, resigno quae dedit et mea
virtute me involvo probamque
pauperiem sine dote quaero.—iii. 29. 49-56.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. II CAR. III

LIB. II CAR. III

Aequam memento rebus in arduis
servare mentem, non secus in bonis
ab insolenti temperatam
laetitia, moriture Delli,

seu maestus omni tempore vixeris, 5
seu te in remoto gramine per dies
festos reclinatum bearis
interiore nota Falerni.

quo pinus ingens albaque populus
umbram hospitalem consociare amant 10
ramis? quid obliquo laborat
lympha fugax trepidare rivo?

huc vina et unguenta et nimium breves
flores amoenae ferre iube rosae,
dum res et aetas et sororum 15
fila trium patiuntur atra.

cedes coemptis saltibus et domo
villaque flavus quam Tiberis lavit;
cedes, et exstructis in altum
divitiis potietur heres. 20

divesne prisco natus ab Inacho
nil interest an pauper et infima
de gente sub divo moreris,
victima nil miserantis Orci.

omnes eodem cogimur, omnium 25
versatur urna serius ocus
sors exitura et nos in aeternum
exsilium impositura cumbae.

BOOK II ODE III

EQUANIMITY

quod si quis vera vitam ratione gubernet
divitiae grandes homini sunt vivere parce
aequo animo.

LUCRETIVS.

THE ODE IN GENERAL.—In this ode Horace deals with life, and he deals with it according to his wont. The tone is that of the Epicurean: Life is short; is full of change; full, too, of uncertainty. The one certainty is death, which awaits us all alike. Let this thought, he urges, exert a moderating influence over life's whole course. So long as opportunity and faculty last it is wisdom to enjoy the present, and this the more as the fated end draws nigh. The grave awaits us all. *Pallida Mors*—pale Death—will knock at every door, alike at the beggar's hovel and at the palace of the monarch. For all the bark waits which will ferry each in turn to that bourn whence no traveller returns.

VERSES 1-4:

It is, however, the nobler side of Epicureanism that meets us in stanza one, a view so noble as to approximate even to the Stoic cast of thought. The ideal of the latter school of philosophy was this very *aequa mens*—ἀπάθεια—equanimity of soul, freedom of soul from all that would perturb, whether it be pleasure or pain, prosperity or adversity.

Thus the underlying idea of this ode is not simply 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die'; it is rather 'Let death, kept in mind, calm and steady life', for thus the varying lots of men are equalized.

Thus *aequa mens* strikes the key-note of this whole poem. Circumstances are ever changing; fickle Fortune's wheel is ever on the turn; life's weather is fair and foul; life itself tastes now sweet, now bitter.

To steady, then, the soul, keep thou in mind, O *Dellius*,¹ that thou art born to die: *memento . . . moriture*. It is a noble

¹ Q. Dellius, an eques who was nicknamed by Messalla Corvinus 'desultor bellorum civium' on account of the frequency with which he changed sides in the civil war. He joined Dolabella in Asia in 44 B. C. went over to Cassius and later to M. Antony, deserting finally to Octavius. Plutarch's account of the war against the Parthians was probably taken from a history of that war by Dellius. His private character was not beyond reproach: 'Hic est Dellius, cuius Epistulae ad Cleopatram lascivae feruntur.' Cf. Smith's Dictionary of Biography, i. 956.

note, so far at least as it is a natural protest that a man should be no 'creature of circumstances' (ignoble phrase!) but rather their master.

If the way be steep—*arduis*—yet let the mind keep its own true level: *aequam servare mentem*; and when things go well and the joy of prosperity swells the heart, tempting to indulgence and wantonness, still let that grave thought that thou must die temper and restrain thy gladness. Amidst all the mutations of life keep thou the equal mind: *aequam servare mentem*.¹

It is interesting to compare St. Paul's statement of his mental attitude in this connexion: 'I have learnt . . . to be content (*αὐτάρκης*). I know how to be abased and I know also how to abound.' His steadfast equanimity does not, however, spring from contemplation of the great negative that life must soon end, but from the great positive that true life has no end, that death hath been abolished and life and immortality brought to light.

The one looks at things seen and notes that they fleet and soon must pass and death for each end all, thus making all lives equal and levelling out as it were the ups and downs of each separate life. For what is pleasure if it so soon must wane and fade, and what is pain if it too shall pass? Thus to Horace is '*mors ultima linea rerum*'.

But St. Paul has laid hold of life eternal, the life that is really life—*ἡ ὄντως ζωή*—and so, not because man is mortal but because he is immortal, there comes to faith the *aequa mens*, steadfast alike in prosperity and adversity.

Horace, then, finds the great leveller of the inequalities in human lot in Death—in the fact that all are alike mortal. Morality finds it in Duty, which attaches to all and to all alike; while religion, interpreting and consummating morality, reaches higher still and finds the true leveller in the soul's relation to God—all are His children.

VERSES 5-16:

Stanza two, rendering, as poetry must, the abstract *rebus arduis* and *rebus bonis* into the personal concrete, divides mankind into two classes.

On the former Horace does not linger, unlike our own poet Crabbe who dwells on human woe with painful and exhaustive minuteness. He simply notes the man whose life throughout, in all its crises—*omni tempore*—has been sad and sorrowful, notes him and passes on.

¹ μήτε νικῶν ἀμφάδην ἀγάλλεο,
μήτε νικηθεὶς ἐν οἴκῳ καταπεσὼν ὀδύρεο.—ARCHILOCHUS.

But the latter, Horace, with his pleasure-loving temperament, delights to dwell upon and picture to us—the man who ‘does well to himself’: **te bearis**. Having the means, he blesses himself, enjoys himself, and in characteristic fashion the poet paints the scene, and we behold the pleasure-lover at his ease, far from the dust and turmoil of the city, in **remoto gramine**. Stretched on the grassy sward around some ‘Castle of Indolence’ he spends long summer days—**per dies festos**—not alone, but with companions of kindred mind.

It is a drinking-party; the choice old wine that has been mellowing long in the inmost recess of the wine-bin is brought out: **interiore nota**¹ **Falerni**.

Then with alluring grace the surroundings are pictured and the reveller is urged to obey the call of woodland and of stream. A few choice words at once paint the scene and breathe into it a soul.

The sun is hot and the shade of the over-arching trees is welcome. Here opposites meet to accentuate the accord of all nature: **pinus ingens albaque populus**. The huge, sombre pine and the slight, pale poplar—the one with its dark rigid fringe of green, the other with its loose foliage of white fluttering leaves—interlace their friendly boughs as if they love to offer to friendship the welcome hospitality of shade: **umbram hospitem**² **consociare amant**. Nor is the music of the woodland lacking—rooted trees and gliding rivulet, soft whispering leaves and the low murmur of wimpling water.

No English can do perfect justice to the two lines closing stanza three:

**quid obliquo laborat
lympha fugax trepidare**³ **rivo?**

We can but analyse each word and hold it up to the light. **Lympha** calls up bright, clear water. **Fugax trepidare** pictures trembling haste, an eagerness to flow and flee. In **obliquo laborat rivo** we see the stream as, obstructed by its winding channel-bed, it frets and struggles and so gives forth a murmuring protest in its quivering haste.

¹ The wine-jars were labelled with the name of the Consul for the year in which they were stored. Those at the back of the wine-bin, having been stored first, were the most mellow.

² *obviaque hospitibus teneat frondentibus arbor.*—VIRGIL, *Geor.* iv. 24.

³

the cleft

That tutors the torrent-brook,
Delaying its forceful spleen
With many a wind and crook
Through rock to the broad ravine.

MEREDITH, *The Day of the Daughter of Hades.*

But say! why, to what end, does nature thus invite to rest and gladness, furnishing her best and choicest? 'For thy delight, O *Dellius*!

'Then quick! hither bring the wine, the perfumes and the garlands that feasters love.

'Quick! for, alas! all too quickly fade the sweet rose-blooms; time flies, and bears all pleasant things away:

nimum breves

*flores amoenae rosae.*¹

'Quick then! now, while fortune still is thine, and youth, and those dread Sisters three spin out the fateful threads² whereon thy life is hung.'

VERSES 17-28:

So again the refrain is heard—*moriture*—the muffled bell of doom sounding low yet clear through all nature's music of leaf and rivulet, and the splash of the wine-cup and the mirth of the revellers.

Cedes. 'Thou shalt have to quit these groves and woodlands bought at such cost when thou wert adding land to land—the stately home of thine ancestors, the pleasant villa washed by Tiber's yellow flood, thy familiar well-loved haunts.'

Again the deep note of the warning bell: *cedes*. 'Thou must leave it all, and there shall step into thy place thine heir,³ young, careless, spendthrift may be; and those riches heaped up so high, thine no longer, shall melt away, perchance, beneath a wastrel's hands!'

Then Horace presses home the truth which is to sober and steady life; the grave, implacable, inexorable, pitiless, claims us all—*victima nil miserantis Orci*.

The great distinctions which bulk so large in life's 'vain show'—riches, poverty, high lineage, mean origin—count for nought. 'The lust of the eyes and the pride of life' must pass. Again we have the familiar contrast, the spacious mansion of the rich, and then the *domus exilis Plutonia*⁴—the narrow grave.

¹ δεῦτε οὖν καὶ ἀπολαύσωμεν τῶν ὄντων ἀγαθῶν,
καὶ χρῆσώμεθα τῇ κτίσει ὥς νεότητι σπουδαίως
οἶνον πολυτελοῦς καὶ μύρων πλησθῶμεν,
καὶ μὴ παροδευσάτω ἡμᾶς ἄνθος ἀέρος·
στεφώμεθα ῥόδων κάλυξιν πρὶν ἢ μαρανθῆναι·
μηδεὶς ἡμῶν ἄμοιρος ἔσται τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀγεραρχίας,
πανταχῇ καταλίπωμεν σύμβολα τῆς εὐφροσύνης,
ὅτι αὐτῇ ἡ μερὶς ἡμῶν καὶ ὁ κλήρος οὗτος.—Σοφ. Σαλ. ii. 6-9.

² Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears
And slits the thin-spun life.—Lycidas.

³ Cf. ii. 14. 25 ff., iv. 7. 19, 20.

⁴ Cf. i. 4. 17.

But here that 'pride of life' which nourishes itself on high descent is especially noted. Here is a man who loves to trace his ancestral line to **Inachus** of old, legendary king of ancient Argos; and there, by his side, a beggar, of no descent at all, with no roof over his head—**sub divo**—whose very life is but a lingering for death: **moreris**.

So the wide sweep of mortality is presented. Now it is not only **cedes**—thou must depart and leave behind all that thou holdest dear. For the backward look we find the unwilling gaze drawn to the dark forward road that reaches on to the land of ghosts and shadows.

And not to **Dellius** only is the warning spoken but to all men, for all are being driven forwards to that same dark goal like sheep to the fold: **omnes eodem cogimur**. Though it be one by one that the lots fall, yet is every man's name in that urn. Shaken ever in the hands of Fate, sooner or later it shall leap forth—**exitura**¹—yes, and each soul shall embark on that dark passage-boat, a ghost in Charon's skiff—

et nos in aeternum

exsilium impositura cumbae²—

an exile for ever from his sweet native land.

¹ omne capax movet urna nomen,—iii. l. 16.

² Of the boat of Charon called by Aeschylus *θεωρίδα* . . . *πάνδοκον*.—Theb. 858.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. II CAR. X

LIB. II CAR. X

Rectius vives, Licini, neque altum
semper urgendo neque, dum procellas
cautus horrescis, nimium premiendo
litus iniquum.

auream quisquis mediocritatem 5
diligat, tutus caret obsoleti
sordibus tecti, caret invidenda
sobrius aula.

saepius ventis agitur ingens
pinus et celsae graviore casu 10
decidunt turres feriuntque summos
fulgura montes.

sperat infestis, metuit secundis
alteram sortem bene praeparatum
pectus. informes hiemes reducit 15
Iuppiter, idem

summovet. non, si male nunc, et olim
sic erit: quondam cithara tacentem
suscitat Musam neque semper arcum
tendit Apollo. 20

rebus angustis animosus atque
fortis appare; sapienter idem
contrahes vento nimium secundo
turgida vela.

BOOK II ODE X

AN ADMONITION

ὄρῳ τὰ ὑπερέχοντα ζῶα ὡς κεραυνοὶ ὁ θεὸς οὐδὲ ἐκ φαντάζεσθαι, τὰ δὲ
σμικρὰ οὐδὲν μιν κνίξει; ὄρῳ δὲ ὡς ἐς οἰκήματα τὰ μέγιστα αἰεὶ καὶ δένδρεα τὰ
τοιαῦτα ἀποσκήπτει τὰ βέλεα; φιλέει γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰ ὑπερέχοντα πάντα κολοῦειν.

HERODOTUS.

This is a serious, urgent, almost severe address to a friend who much needed such expostulation and rebuke and whose fate justified the reprimand. Throughout the ode there is a striking gravity of moral tone. True, it is the morality of prudence, utilitarian morality, but there is no lightness of the treatment or indulgence in Epicurean sentiment such as we have met with hitherto. It is bracing as a moral tonic with some sharpness in it. It is noble, in so far as prudential morality admits of nobility.

The treatment is, of course, that of a poet; all is in the concrete, abounding in imagery so fine in its terseness that a painter could produce from it a whole gallery of clearly outlined, highly coloured pictures. This aspect of the ode reminds us of the Epistle of St. James, where something of the same austere, didactic tone is found in combination with like gems drawn from nature in the same terseness of outline.

VERSES 1-4:

In the opening words of stanza one the note is sharply struck in the direct address: *rectius vives*, *Licini*,¹ That *rectius* involves a sharp corrective, and the future, *vives*, implies that life with this man will need to be altered and its course changed, or there will be catastrophe. Ruin threatens, the ruin of a life.

Then the poet drops the abstract, complex, all-inclusive word, 'life,' and interprets picturesquely.

'Let the sailor's craft teach thee,' he says. Well it may, for is not life a voyage, and life's sea full of hazard—hazard to the frail bark and deadly peril to the navigator?

¹ L. Licinius Murena, probably the son of the Consul of the same name who was defended by Cicero, was adopted by A. Terentius Varro and took his name. His sister Terentia was the wife of Maecenas. He was of a turbulent and ambitious disposition, ἀκράτῳ καὶ κατακορεῖ παρρησίᾳ πρὸς πάντας ὁμοίως ἐχρήτο (Dion Cassius 54. 3). Hence the warning of Horace. He became involved in a conspiracy against Augustus and was condemned and executed, 22 B. C.

But it is extremes that are dangerous; adventurous rashness on the one hand and cautious timidity on the other. There lies in the background of the poet's mind a special monition—that Greek maxim which was written over the temple at Delphi, *μηδὲν ἄγαν*, 'avoid excess,' and more explicitly its Aristotelean application to ethics, 'Virtue is a mean between two extremes.'¹ That **aurea mediocritas**,² the golden mean, is the doctrine that steadies his thought and which should steady the life of Licinius.

But Horace throws the aphorism into picture.

There is the great, wide sea, the deep—**altum**—where, in Horatian imagery, fierce winds contend with one another and vex the waters, so that seas run high. The ancient dread of the open sea, which is illustrated by the story of St. Paul's voyage and shipwreck in the Acts, gives vividness to the picture.

Here, then, is a navigator who is ever driving his craft out into the open: **altum semper urgendo**. Let him beware!

Yes, but peril lies on the other hand also; and, as it seems to us moderns, the greater peril. Let him take heed lest, in his dread of those driving gales—**procellas**—that rage in the wild waste of open sea, he seek too eagerly the shelter of the headland and hug all too closely the rock-bound, indented shore: **litus iniquum**.

Excess of caution is as dangerous as excess of venture and is a meaner vice. Worst of all perils to the mariner is that dread lee-shore. Hurricane in the open sea may perchance be weathered, but once let the fury of the storm drive the frail ship on through the boiling surf of the breakers to the jagged rocks, as of our Cornish coast, and all is lost.

VERSES 5-8:

Then, extracting the moral from the picture, in stanza two he extols explicitly the safety of 'the golden mean': **aurea mediocritas**. Let it dwell, he implies, in the soul, and it will manifest its virtue in the life of the man.

Then follows his picture. This time it is not the rocking sea but the stable earth, not a voyage but a dwelling-place and home.

He who makes 'the golden mean' his loving choice—**quisquis diligit**—will make this his prayer: 'Give me neither poverty nor riches,' and shall abide in safety. To be **sobrius**³ is to be **tutus**, to be temperate is to be safe, and, as in stanza one, safe from a twofold danger.

¹ Cf. Ep. i. 18. 9.

² 'illa mediocritas quae est inter nimium et parum,'—CICERO, de Off. i. 89. τὸν μέσον ἀναγκαῖον βίον εἶναι βέλτιστον.—ARIS. Polit. iv. 1.

³ **sobrius** = σώφρων, 'temperate in all things.'

Caret is a neutral word which receives its special tint or flavour from its context. Thus in the first of these two pictures of a home its meaning is, 'he is saved from'; in the second, 'he shuns.'

The first represents a time-worn hovel falling to pieces. It has still a roof indeed, but it is **obsoletum tectum**, with gaps and rifts in its rotting rafters, affording no protection from the weather and itself a peril. Dropping to pieces, it may fall some night about the tenant's ears and be his death.

It is squalid too as well as dangerous: **sordibus**. A temperate soul—a *e qua mens*—will surely save a man from falling so low as to have such a hovel for his home.

But on the other hand that same well-tempered spirit, as it escapes squalid poverty, will shun superfluous wealth. There lies therein a peril no less grave, perchance more grave.

There are other storms more devastative than natural tempest. That **invidenda aula**, suggestive of the magnificence and luxury of some new-built palace, is a home more dangerous than a cottage in ruins. It is a mark for envious eyes and for the fury of jealous hate.

It was the Tuileries that attracted the storm of the French Revolution; it was on the chateaux of the nobles that the red rain of the Jacquerie fell.

Ah! but there is a golden treasure that is a safe possession—**aurea mediocritas**; that golden mean is a charm against all hazards whether of poverty or riches.

VERSES 9-12:

It is a storm, then, that, running through the earlier verses, gives the note for stanza three. This affords a landscape, companion to that of the sea, and introduced on account of its bearing on what Horace has chiefly in mind—the perils of ambition and of conspicuous success. It is a picture in three cameos—trees, buildings, mountains; all that stands high, all that is conspicuous preaches to us on this text.

Ingens pinus, the mighty pine, reappears,¹ a giant stem upreared and standing in high places. Exposed to the fury of the blast it rocks and may come crashing down, while humbler trees and shrubs in sheltered places are safe, either hiding from the sweeping gale or bending before it.

Again, it is proud, lofty towers, not low-built cottage walls, that fall with the heaviest crash:

¹ From ii. 3. 9.

celsae graviore casu
decidunt turres.

Once more, it is conspicuous mountain peaks that draw the lightning.¹

Beware, then, O my friend !

VERSES 13-20 :

In stanza four, Horace, dropping all figures, urges his plea, and in terse, compactest phrase proclaims his healing doctrine. Here he touches a higher note.

In the soul itself lies safety ; in the soul itself that golden mean may live and reign. It is the **bene praeparatum pectus** that gives a man immunity from fear, gives him true independence and makes him, what a man should be, master of his circumstances and not their creature. It is the steadfast mind—*aequa mens*—that meets life's changes with a steady front. With this, 'patience' will work 'experience, and experience hope'.

'Note well,' he cries, 'adversity will not always last. Then hope !

'Nor will prosperity for ever smile upon thee. Then fear !

'Each in its proper place : **sperat**² **infestis, metuit secundis**. Expect ever the **alteram sortem**, which will surely come. Have good hope in darkest and most dangerous times, and sober fear when all goes well.

'Lift up your eyes ; look higher than the ever shifting surface of circumstance ; great Jove rules all.'

And though the reference of Horace here is scarce deeper than to 'the course of nature', yet let nature teach. As in the round of the year she brings Winter's storms which strip the woods of leaves and deface the beauty of the world, so shall that same hand by and by, in due season, withdraw

¹ Sophocles gives the same warning but he enforces it by another figure :

ἀλλ' ἴσθι τοι τὰ σκλήρ' ἄγαν φρονήματα
πίπτειν μάλιστα, καὶ τὸν ἐγκρατέστατον
σίδηρον ὀπτὸν ἐκ πυρὸς περισκελῇ
θραυσθέντα καὶ βαγέντα πλείστ' ἂν εἰσίδοις.

Antig. 473-6.

² θαρσεῖν χρή, φίλε Βάττε· τάχ' αὐριον ἔσσει' ἄμεινον.
ἐλπίδες ἐν ζωοῖσιν, ἀνέλπιστοι δὲ θανόντες.
χὼ Ζεὺς ἄλλοκα μὲν πέλει αἰθριος, ἄλλοκα δ' ὕει.

THEOCRITUS, iv. 41.

iam mala finissem leto, sed credula vitam
spes fovet et fore cras semper ait melius.
spes alit agricolas, spes sulcis credit aratis
semina quae magno faenore reddat ager.

TIBULLUS, ii. 6. 19.

them—*idem summovet*—and there shall be sweet Spring and glowing Summer once again.

Meet changes then with steadfast mind ; times will change ; therein lies comfort, often all the comfort we can reach. If things go ill now, be sure it shall not always be so :

*non, si male nunc, et olim
sic erit.*

Then a lighter tone. 'Ah! friend, let a poet speak. He too has his dark and dreary times when he cannot sing and when his sovereign lord, *Apollo*, is wroth with him. *Apollo's* is the bow of death, his too the lyre and the song ; by turns he is to those who serve him dark and bright.

'He never lays aside his bow, 'tis true : *numquam umeris positurus arcum*.¹ But wait awhile! thou shall see it swing idly at his side. It is not always on the stretch : *non semper arcum tendit*.

'Nay, now the tuneful lyre is in his hands and with it, lo, he wakes to song the silent muse : *cithara tacentem suscitatur Musam*.'

VERSES 21-24 :

Finally, Horace, in the last stanza, packs his meaning into terse command :

*'rebus angustis animosus atque
fortis appare.*

In the sharp straits of life be, and aye show thyself to be, of good heart and brave to endure.'

And then with keener thrust, as more to the point here with his ambitious friend : 'What I advise is wisdom's part ; but, mind you, it is no less wise, when favouring winds blow all too strong, to draw in thy swelling sails and let some of the flattering breeze go by :

*sapienter idem
contrahes vento nimium secundo²
turgida vela.'*

¹ iii. 4. 60. *Apollo* is the god of destruction (*ἀπόλλυμι*) but also of music and of song. He has many other attributes.

² *secundus* is from *sequi*, 'to follow' = driven by a following wind ; cf. *ὄψρος*, 'a fair wind,' and *ὀύριος*, 'fortunate.' For '*nimum secundus*' cf. *δυσούριος* = 'driven by a too favourable wind' = prospering unhappily. 'Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord?'—Prov. xxx. 9.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. II CAR. XIV

LIB. II CAR. XIV

Eheu fugaces, Postume, Postume,
labuntur anni nec pietas moram
rugis et instanti senectae
adferet indomitaque morti :

non si trecentis quotquot eunt dies, 5
amice, places illacrimabilem
Plutona tauris, qui ter amplum
Geryonen Tityonque tristi

compescit unda, scilicet omnibus,
quicumque terrae munere vescimur, 10
enaviganda, sive reges
sive inopes erimus coloni.

frustra cruento Marte carebimus
fractisque rauci fluctibus Hadriae,
frustra per autumnos nocentem
corporibus metuemus Austrum : 15

visendus ater flumine languido
Cocytos errans et Danai genus
infame damnatusque longi
Sisyphus Aeolides laboris :

linquenda tellus et domus et placens
uxor, neque harum quas colis arborum
te praeter invisas cupressos
ulla brevem dominum sequetur :

absumet heres Caecuba dignior
servata centum clavibus et mero
tinget pavementum superbo,
pontificum potiore cenis.

BOOK II ODE XIV

ALL IS VANITY

I hated all my labour wherein I laboured under the sun : seeing that I must leave it unto the man that shall be after me. And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity.—Eccles. ii. 18, 19.

This ode, addressed apparently to a wealthy but somewhat niggard friend, rebukes in biting tone the folly of his life. The accustomed Epicurean wisdom is inculcated, not lightly and playfully as is the poet's wont, but with incisive bitterness and a note of contempt which distinguishes this ode from others.

The key-note is the 'Thou fool' of the parable in the Gospels, but with a difference. There, the folly of one who holds that a man's life consists 'in the abundance of the things that he possesses' is exposed; here, the folly of the man who, while he believes that enjoyment is the end of life and echoes the formula, 'Eat, drink and be merry,' yet delays to carry it out, trusting, by pious bargaining with the ruling Powers, to cheat Time, Old Age and Death of their inevitable prey.

VERSES I-12:

The first word sounds the note of bitterness, **eheu!** 'Alas!' The first line is a sharp call repeated in its haste and urgency, as though to awaken some sleeper who is in imminent peril—one dead asleep to the meaning and uses of life.

'**Postume! Postume!**' Bethink thee, man! The fleeting years are gliding swiftly by; like smooth running water they lull thee to a fatal sleep: **eheu fugaces labuntur² anni.**

'**Pietas!**³ Pious observance! Fool, is this thy trust? Dost think to buy from the dread Lord of Hades an especial grace, some longer span of life in which to add field to field, to plant and build—build larger barns wherein to bestow thy corn and thy wine?

¹ The repeated word brings out the sadness and yearning. 'Simon, Simon,'—Luke xxii. 31.

² **labuntur** is frequently applied to the silent flight of time.

tempora labuntur tacitisque senescimus annis.—OVID, *Fast.* vi. 771.

³ non, Torquate, genus, non te facundia, non te restituet pietas.—iv. 7. 23.

'Nay, wake up to the truth of things. See, thy life is fast running out with the swift-gliding years, nor shall thine offerings check its flow nor bring thee any reprieve from the common doom.

'**Nec moram rugis**: the deep lines which care and thrift and greed grave on the anxious face are already visible.

'Old age, that chill shadow of death, creeps on unhindered and shall strike thy senses with torpor and thy powers with infirmity: **instanti senectae**.

'Death itself, that casts its shadow thus, death inevitable, inexorable, whom none can tame—**indomitae morti**—is moving towards thee swiftly with the fleeting years. Awake! Bethink thee!

'Nay, friend, no delay, no reprieve canst thou buy though with three hundred hecatombs for each day that passes thou shouldst seek to win dread **Pluto** to thy plea. Inexorably stern is he to prayers and tears. And power is his no giant's might can master. For witness see huge **Geryon's** monstrous triple form and **Tityos**¹ lie, fast prisoners in his gloomy realm, hemmed in by that dismal flood which all of us poor mortals who feed upon the fruits of earth²—**fruges consumere nati**—must one day cross, yea, be they rich as kings, or, perchance, poor tillers of the soil.

'Aye, and shall cross but once, for there is no return. It is the lot of all: **scilicet omnibus**.'

VERSES 13-20:

Again the note is sounded, 'No reprieve! No escape, take what heedful care thou wilt! It is vain, dost hear? vain, vain: **frustra, frustra, frustra**!

'Thou mayest, perchance, escape the carnage of the bloody battlefield, escape the broken surging waters of the hoarse thundering sea, escape in trembling haste that deadly stifling wind³ that in the Autumn months makes Rome a place to shun.

'Escape life's risks with what care thou canst! Yet life itself and light shall pass, are passing now.

'Other sights await thine eyes. Down in the under-

¹ καὶ Τιτυὸν εἶδον, Γαίης ἐρικυδέος υἱόν,
κείμενον ἐν δαπέδῳ· ὃ δ' ἐπ' ἐννέα κείτο πέλεθρα,
γυῖπε δέ μιν ἐκάτερθε παρημένω ἦπαρ ἔκειρον,
δέρτρον ἔσω δύνοντες· ὃ δ' οὐκ ἀπαμύνετο χερσὶ·
Λητῶ γὰρ ἤλκησε, Διὸς κυδρὴν παράκοιτιν,
Πυθῶδ' ἐρχομένην διὰ καλλιχόρου Πανοπήος.

HOMER, Od. xi. 576-81.

² βροτῶν, οἱ ἀρούρης καρπὸν ἔδουσι.—HOMER, Il. vi. 142.

³ **Austrum]**

nec mala me ambitio perdit nec plumbeus Auster
autumnusque gravis, Libitinae quaestus acerbae.—Sat. ii. 6. 18.

world thou must behold **Cocytos**, black river of wailing, winding its slow oozy flood.

‘And there, in hell, thine unwilling eyes shall rest on those who expiate in endless toil the crimes they wrought on earth—**Danai genus infame**, those ill-famed daughters of Danaus filling for ever their dripping sieves; and **Sisyphus**,¹ condemned to roll for ever up the steep the stone which still for ever from the summit comes bounding down.’

VERSES 21-24 :

To that forward, terror-stricken look into the dark horrors of the dread under-world—**visendus**, there answers now, in stanza six, the pathetic backward glance directed to the sweet life on earth which must be left behind: **linquenda**. ‘The bright fair world—**tellus**, and that spot upon it granted for thy very own, thy home—**domus**, and she whose love has made for thee its central peace and joy, the wife in whom thy soul delighteth—**placens uxor**—all must be left behind as time’s swift current bears thy life away.’

Then it would seem that, as each distinct figure fades from the sight of the departing soul, lands and home and those who dwell therein, there are yet discernible in dim outline the wide woodlands in which the whole scene is set, the trees so carefully planted, so lovingly tended, so fondly possessed. ‘Thy part in them shall pass, for thou must die though they live on. Thou must leave them all.

‘Yet no! There is one tree that shall follow thee to the end, one that shall still be thine. The loathed cypress shall deck thy tomb and stand a witness to thy brief lordship over them: **invisas cupressos**.’

VERSES 25-28 :

‘And from thy place in Hades thou mayest see what shall follow in the home thou hast left for ever.

‘The decorous funeral rites accomplished, see, thine heir² enters into possession of all thy thrift had locked so close.

¹ καὶ μὴν Σίσυφον εἰσεῖδον κρατέρ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα,
 λᾶαν βαστάζοντα πελώριον ἀμφοτέρῃσιν.
 ἦ τοι ὁ μὲν σκηριπτόμενος χερσὶν τε ποσὶν τε
 λᾶαν ἄνω ὤθεσκε ποτὶ λόφον· ἄλλ' ὅτε μέλλοι
 ἄκρον ὑπερβαλεῖν, τότ' ἀποστρέψασκε κραταίς·
 αὐτὶς ἔπειτα πέδονδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀναιδής.
 αὐτὰρ ὁ γ' ἄψ' ὥσασκε τιτανόμενος, κατὰ δ' ἰδρὼς
 ἔρρεεν ἐκ μελέων, κονίη δ' ἐκ κρατὸς ὀρώρει.

HOMER, Od. xi. 593-600.

² cuncta manus avidas fugient heredis, amico
 quae dederis animo.—iv. 7. 19.

Thou wast a fool to hoard thy treasure for a spendthrift to squander. Ah ! thine heir, wiser and worthier than thou at least in this, shall revel in thy best—in that old **Caecuban**, rarest of choice wine.

‘He shall burst the hundred locks that guard it and with his crew of wassailers shall broach thy precious vintage, aye, and waste the best. That generous wine that would grace high festival when pontiffs quaff in state, see it gulped down in this wastrels’ carouse. Mark the stain on thy fair floor, the wasteful splash on thy marble pavement from the drunkards’ cups.

‘O Postumus, be wise ; be wise in time.’

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. II CAR. XV

LIB. II CAR. XV

Iam pauca aratro iugera regiae
moles relinquent, undique latius
extenta visentur Lucrino
stagna lacu, platanusque caelebs

evincet ulmos; tum violaria et 5
myrtus et omnis copia narium
spargent olivetis odorem
fertilibus domino priori;

tum spissa ramis laurea fervidos 10
excludet ictus. non ita Romuli
praescriptum et intonsi Catonis
auspiciis veterumque norma.

privatus illis census erat brevis,
commune magnum: nulla decempedis
metata privatis opacam 15
porticus excipiebat Arcton,

nec fortuitum spernere caespitem
leges sinebant, oppida publico
sumptu iubentes et deorum
templa novo decorare saxo. 20

BOOK II ODE XV

LUXURY

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay :
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made ;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, e'er England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintain'd its man ;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more :
His best companions, innocence and health,
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd ; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land and dispossess the swain :
Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose :
And every want to luxury allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.

GOLDSMITH.

This ode is at once ethical in tone and political in its moral purpose. Not an individual, but the *Populus Romanus* is addressed. It is virtually an outlook on the changes of the time ; a contrast with old days ; an implied lament with a note of warning in it—a note sounded more gravely still in the great political odes, *I* to *VI* in Book III, *pro curia* *inversique mores*, 'Shame on manners that invert the Rome of old !'

Foreign conquest had brought wealth to imperial Rome, and wealth had, as ever, brought luxury in its train. Luxury and indulgence were relaxing the fibre of the race, sapping the foundations of virtue and patriotism and with these, in the long run, imperial dominion. Hence, the ethical tone of the ode is nationalized.

But all is given as usual in the concrete ; first, pictures for the eye ; then, if to sight insight be added, truth for the mind and heart—grave truth for all who loved their country well and wisely.

Examining the ode in detail we may find the key-word

in **visentur**. It is a view of a wide landscape—Rome and its vicinity, a scene of patent ever-growing magnificence.

But it is especially this growth that strikes the observer; not so much what now appears, as what is in immediate prospect. This is the absorbing interest, and it is tinged with foreboding. The whole series of verbs with which the ode opens is in the future tense: **relinquent, visentur, evincet, spargent, excludet**.

This prospective note is struck in the very first word—**iam**; even now, already, this and this; what will it one day come to be? Such is our own anxious inquiry when we consider the rate at which the British Empire has grown and is growing, or the amazing growth of London.

But while it is the future that is so emphasized the ode is nevertheless cast in all tenses. There is Rome as it now appears to the scrutinizing observer; then, based on this, the outlook to what shall be; and last, an unbidden, half-frightened backward glance into past times, the brave days of old. A sharp contrast is drawn between the present and the past which, with its implications, makes up the unuttered soul of meaning animating these pictures. This makes of the whole ode an instruction and a warning.

VERSES I-IO^A:

The ode begins,

**iam pauca aratro iugera regiae
moles relinquunt.**

Long ago the change began and now it strikes the eye, look where we may. Ere long the old will have vanished from the scene.

The old Roman state was a community of farmers; **aratro iugera** is a picture of the land as it then was. But now, '**iam pauca**,' exclaims the poet with a sigh, 'soon there will be few left, perhaps none.'

The glorious days of the old Roman state make a foil for these intruding regal piles: **regiae moles**.¹ Each of these words implies an outrage on primitive republican simplicity; **regiae**, with its suggestion of the hated 'rex', and **moles**, with its implication that these huge palaces are Oriental, not Roman. So great is the area they cover that ere long there will be no field left² for the ploughman and his team of oxen.

¹ Cf. '*molem propinquam nubibus*' (iii. 29. 10) of the palace of Maecenas on the Esquiline.

² The land under cultivation was restricted, not alone by the magnificent mansions of the wealthy citizens of Rome which covered an incredible area, but by the parks, game preserves, canals, fish-ponds and woods attached to these. For other contributing causes see Page, *in loco*.

Luxury is invading simplicity of life and manners—luxury of habitation ; and the poet sighs.

But now the eye sweeps over an ampler prospect. Far and wide sheets of standing water gleam in the broad acreage of palace grounds. One might take them for natural lakes so ample are they, wide as the famed **Lucrine Lake**.

The adjective is a revealing one. Delicate shell-fish such as epicures love came from the waters of that lake ; so likewise these **stagna** are fish-ponds,¹ preserves.

Lo ! these magnates must have each a **Lucrine Lake** to himself that he may feed daintily. Pampered in their luxurious palaces, they must be pampered in palate too.

‘Ah me !’ again the poet sighs ; ‘luxury of appetite is invading the old simplicity of rustic fare.’

Again this reflective observer looks round and asks, ‘Where are the vineyards ?’ Elms festooned with fruitful vines, elms that were but supports to the loaded branches of the fruit-bearing trees, are displaced, like the ploughing-fields. In their stead stand the broad-spreading plane-trees solitary and unfruitful :

platanusque caelebs
evincet ulmos.

The vines wedded to the elms² bore fruit, rich luscious grapes ; but the plane-trees in the parks ! ornament and shade are their only utility. The fruit of the one is the grape, the fruit of the other a shadow when the sun beats hot. Luxury of the palace roof and ceiling is transferred to the green canopy of the spreading broad-leaved tree.

Again the poet looks around.

‘Where are the olive-groves, source of rich profit to him who once owned this land ?’ Gone, like the corn and the wine, is the oil.

Instead are the languorous odours of sweet smelling plants and flowers ; beds of violet, shrubberies of aromatic myrtle,

¹ For the size of the fish-ponds cf. Seneca (Controv. 4. 5) ‘navigabilia piscinarum freta’. The Lucrine Lake, to which they are here compared, was in the neighbourhood of Baiae and was famous for its oysters.

² Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine :

Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine ;

Whose weakness married to thy stronger state

Makes me with thy strength to communicate.

Comedy of Errors, II. ii. 175.

they led the vine
To wed her elm ; she, spoused, about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves.—Paradise Lost, v. 215-19.

may, the whole company of flowers that fill the air with sweetness :

violaria¹ et
myrtus et omnis copia narium
spargent olivetis odorem
fertilibus domino priori.

Ah! here again is luxury, and of the soft, sensuous, enervating kind.

And then—**tum**—so delicate are we grown, forsooth, that we must needs filter the sunbeams through thick-grown laurel boughs lest they smite—**ictus**—and slay these tender nurslings of humanity whose fathers were men.

'Ah me,' and the sigh is deeper now, 'it was not by such weaklings that Rome was built and her dominion firmly based. Can it be that the simplicity and strength of manhood of her sons have melted away?'

VERSES 10^B-20:

Then a pause, a long-drawn sigh, and the gathering feeling finds expression as the poet looks back through the mist of tradition and legend to the brave days of old. 'Ah! it was not so then: **non ita**.'

The great figure of the first founder of Rome looms up before the mind's eye. Not these the rules of life of the men of old—**veterum norma**; not these the auspices which had shadowed forth the coming greatness of the mighty city; not so would **Romulus** have ordered things had his authority prescribed her future course.

Again overleaping centuries he sees the rugged figure of old **Cato** the Censor, last representative of the old Roman spirit to these degenerate days, a scowl upon his stern, unshaven² face. How would he have dealt with the poor effeminacies of these soft, luxurious days?

No vast revenue had those simple fathers of the race. Their modest income was soon reckoned: **privatus illis census erat brevis**. It was the treasury of the state that was rich³ in those good old days: **commune magnum**.

¹ 'an ego fundum cultiorem putem, in quo mihi quis ostenderit lilia et violas et anemonas, fontes surgentes, quam ubi plena messis aut graves fructu vites erunt.'—**QUINTILIANUS**, viii, 3. 8.

² **intonsi Catonis]** Cato the Censor was, to the Roman who came after him, the type of old-fashioned virtue and ancient Roman citizenship. He was the dread of all who lived in luxury or who sought to grow rich on public spoils. He wore his beard in imitation of the old Roman custom and as a tribute to his ancestors.

³ 'haec ratio ac magnitudo animorum in maioribus nostris fuit, ut, cum in privatis rebus suisque sumptibus minimo contenti tenuissimo cultu viverent,

Not each for himself, but all for the common weal, such was the rule in the olden times. But times have changed.

And again the eye rests sadly on those lordly palaces, their shaded porticoes and peristyles, built surely not for poor mortals of a day but for the Heavenly Gods; not palaces but temples, surely, where gods have their shrine, or, at least, where senators meet; on such a scale are they!

nulla decempedis

metata privatis.

And see, those costly pillared porticoes are nicely planned to catch the fresh cool air from the north—

opacam

porticus excipiebat Arcton—

planned, as all else is, to minister to the delicate softness of these weaklings.

Why, in the old days, **nec leges sinebant**, stern laws forbade to build more than rough shelter for men's homes. Let them use what chance stone or sod lay near and build and roof their huts with these: **nec fortuitum spernere caespitem.**

But these same laws bade the citizens spare no labour and no cost when the Forum and the court houses and the temples were to be built. These, firmly based and builded with new-hewn stone, must be adorned with frieze and pediment and pillar—**templa novo decorare saxo**—grand symbols of the state founded on justice and the fear of the gods.

'Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.'

in imperio atque in publica dignitate omnia ad gloriam splendoremque revocarent.'—CICERO, *pro Flacco*, 28.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. II CAR. XVIII

LIB. II CAR. XVIII

Non ebur neque aureum
mea renidet in domo lacunar,
non trabes Hymettiae
premunt columnas ultima recisas

Africa, neque Attali 5
ignotus heres regiam occupavi,
nec Laconicas mihi
trahunt honestae purpuras clientae :

at fides et ingeni
benigna vena est, pauperemque dives 10
me petit : nihil supra
deos lacesso nec potentem amicum

largiora flagito,
satis beatus unicis Sabinis.
truditur dies die, 15
novaeque pergunt interire lunae :

tu secanda marmora
locas sub ipsum funus et sepulcri
immemor struis domos
marisque Bais obstrepentis urges 20

summovere litora,
parum locuples continente ripa.
quid quod usque proximos
revellis agri terminos et ultra

limites clientium
salis avarus ? pellitur paternos
in sinu ferens deos
et uxor et vir sordidosque natos. 25

nulla certior tamen
rapacis Orci fine destinata
aula divitem manet
erum. quid ultra tendis ? aequa tellus 30

pauperi recluditur
regumque pueris, nec satellites Orci
callidum Promethea
revexit auro captus. hic superbum 35

Tantalum atque Tantali
genus coercet, hic levare functum
pauperem laboribus
vocatus atque non vocatus audit. 40

BOOK II ODE XVIII

CONTRASTED IDEALS

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?

O sweet content!

Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed?

O punishment!

Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed

To add to golden numbers golden numbers?

O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?

O sweet content!

Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?

O punishment!

Then he that patiently Want's burden bears

No burden bears, but is a king, a king!

O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!

DEKKER.

In this ode Horace sings the praises of modest content in material things, combined with spiritual possessions such as enrich and adorn life. This he does in picturing his own home, its dignity, simplicity and contentment suggesting 'plain living and high thinking'.

It is comparison and contrast that suggest the outline of the ode. The first two stanzas give the foil upon which his own home—the '*domus mea*'—stands out distinct. My home is not such as this.

But through the picture runs a succession of negatives, the first of which sharply opens the poem. *Non ebur* is followed by *neque, non, neque, nec*. He paints the luxury that had flowed in upon wealth, the 'vain show', 'the lust of the eyes', 'the pride of life', implying their vanity and unworthiness and their utter impotence to satisfy a soul.

VERSES 1-8:

The teaching is all pictorially given; it is not didactic but concrete, addressing the eye, the senses; not an abstract word occurs.

The palace of the rich man is pictured; the view is an interior. The whole earth has been ransacked to furnish it forth with costly adornment. Ivory, gold, marble, each typical and representative of rarity and splendour, have

been gathered from far-off lands¹ with infinite toil and expense.

The scene is suffused with colour. The poet enters the spacious hall and looks up. The ceiling, scooped and panelled by the chisel, glistens with soft white of ivory and the gleam of fretted gold-work: *ebur . . . aureum lacunar renidet*.

Then, as he beholds and admires, he breaks forth, half in humour half in irony, with a sigh, 'Ah! in my home—*mea in domo*—no such splendour is to be found.'

Again his eye is attracted by the pillars which support this splendid roof, shafts of rich dark marble brought from far-off Libya, veined with colour, finely hewn, shaped and polished at infinite expense. Following them upwards he beholds the massive architrave with its great weight of white Pentelic marble from the quarries of Mount Hymettus, all carved by Greek sculpters in frieze and cornice:

*trabes Hymettiae
premunt columnas ultima recisas
Africa.*

Then, as the splendour fades from the gaze, the mind dwells upon the cost of it all. Such extravagant luxury implies vast wealth, the wealth of kings and of the wealthiest of kings. King *Attalus*² of Pergamos is the suggestive name, familiar to all ears; he who left his kingdom and its vast revenues to Rome.

Again the note of irony is heard, 'Ah,' 'twas hardly likely any share of all this wealth would fall to me! An obscure freedman's son would be an heir of whom King *Attalus* indeed could never dream: *ignotus heres*.' And since it is the palatial house just pictured that has called up King *Attalus* he adds, '*neque regiam occupavi*.'

Then from palace-hall he passes to the rich clothing of those who dwell there. All must match. Those who dwell in kings' houses must be clad in purple: *Laconicas purpuras*. Again, surely, the touch of irony appears in the adjective. The simplicity of Sparta convicts of effeminacy the costly robes.

But the poet's thoughts fly back to the Roman noble's home, with its retinue of clients and retainers who add their homage and their honourable service to the great man's state, and

¹ Contrast the '*fortuitum caespitem*' of 15. 17.

² This *Attalus* was the third king of Pergamos of that name. The beginning of his brief reign was made notorious by his cruelty, but later he abandoned the administration of his kingdom and devoted himself to sculpture and gardening. When he died, 133 B.C., he had made the Romans the heirs of his great wealth.

whose wives spin and weave for him the costly fabric of his robes.

Thus is picturesquely given the completed foil on which the *domus mea* and its inmate, the poet himself, stand out in clear outline.

VERSES 9-14:

The contrast is sharply, incisively struck by the adversative conjunction, *at*, which introduces stanza three. And now it is no longer the house wherein the man dwells, but the man himself who stands presented to us. The gaze is directed now, not to decorated walls and ceiling nor to sumptuous robes, no longer to any outward thing, but to the hidden man of the mind and of the heart.

If it is furnishing, it is that of the man's mind, the apparel of his soul; not gold and ivory and marble but *fides*, the honour which has its root in his spirit. He points, not to veins of precious metal from the mine, nor to the curious veining of the marble, but to that inborn vein of kindness and wit that is native to the soul:

*at fides et ingeni
benigna vena est.*

'These are my wealth,' the poet cries, 'and so, poor as I am, the rich man courts me;¹ he, at least, who has come to know that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth".'

'He seeks me; not I him.

'And he seeks not mine but me:

*pauperemque dives
me petit.*

'A sweet content is mine,
nihil supra

deos lacesso.

When I pray, it is not to importune heaven for more than I possess. And though I may call a great and powerful man my friend yet I do not weary him with pleading for bestowal of larger benefits.

'Did not Maecenas bestow on me my upland farm among the Sabine hills? I seek no more:

*nec potentem amicum
largiora flagito,
satis beatus unicus Sabinis.*

Nihil supra; satis beatus—these measure my content.'

¹ And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind.

VERSES 15-28:

Then Horace turns to some ambitious, grasping man, sharply addressed in mingled pity and contempt.

‘**Tu**—thou! Hurrying on to the grave, art thou still pursuing shadows? A stranger ever art thou to the sweet content that is mine, a stranger to calm and leisure and to the satisfied yet quickened life.

‘Thou, with feverish haste, wouldest snatch and grasp at more and ever more of the poor shell and circumstance of life while life itself is missed. And yet thou art passing, speeding to the grave; yes, and art almost there: **sub ipsum funus.**’

This conception of feverish haste is expressed in the phrase, **truditur dies die.**

Instead of a serene succession, each complete in its wholeness of life, the days are represented as an eager jostling crowd,¹ each thrust on by that which follows, each on the heels of the other.

And as the brief days, so the months—**novae lunae**—hurry on. Whither? To the attainment of some satisfying good? Nay, nay, their feverish haste in all this rush of days and months is but ‘to perish’: **pergunt interire!**

So men ‘get on’, and seldom ask, ‘Whither?’ ‘What is the goal of all?’ For most, alas! it would seem to be but a ‘getting on’—to perish.

So Horace returns to that note of vanity with which he started, the ‘vain show’ in which men live. The habitation, not the inhabitant, is foremost in men’s thoughts; the mere shell of life, the palace of costly marble in which the starved and dwindling soul is to live, dwindling to death.

‘What! with the grave full in sight art thou still eagerly pressing thy contracts for the hewing of marble? Hast thou thought whether thou shalt ever live to see the building rise? Thou fool, it is thy sepulchre² thou shouldst be busy with. See where thou standest—**sub ipsum funus**, close upon thine own funeral rites, with the shadow of the tomb upon thee.

‘Yet so wanton is thy wild extravagance that the land is

¹ *urget diem nox et dies noctem.*—Epodes 17. 25.

Burns gives expression to the same idea but with a touch of optimism,

Sun and moon but set to rise,

an optimism which is even more pronounced in the lines of Browning:

Must in death your daylight finish?

My sun sets to rise again.

² Why dost thou build up stately Rooms on high,
Thou who art under Ground to lye?
Thou sow’st and plantest, but no Fruit must see,
For Death, alas! is sowing thee.—COWLEY.

not wide enough for thee. Thou must needs encroach upon the sea,¹ though its vexed waves seem to protest—**maris obstrepentis**—as thou art ever urging on the unnatural work. There, at pleasant **Baiae**,² impatient of the bounding beach, thou art building thy mansion out upon the waters. Ah, grasping at shadows! **parum locuples** in very truth art thou.

‘And all for what? **Quid?** That on the landward side too thy rapacious greed shall run riot in trespass on thy neighbour’s field? That thou shalt tear up the sacred pillars that bound his land, and mark it off from thine—

quod usque proximos

revellis agri terminos?³

That in thine insolence thou shalt overleap the fences that divide from thee the homesteads of thine own clients? Them, by every right, thou art sworn to protect ‘and defend, yet

ultra

limites clientium

salis avarus,

and all to make a little more space for park and pleasure-ground!’

It is a vivid pathetic picture that follows. Behold the peasant driven forth from his humble home! See him on the road, stripped of all save the images of his ancestral household gods, those poor Penates whose powers had availed nothing to save him from ruin.

See him wearily plodding his way, he knows not whither, cherishing in his bosom, now their only shrine, the **paternos deos**, while at his side are his weeping wife and ragged, ill-kempt children, **sordidos natos**. Ah, **natos!** would that they had never been born!

To such lengths of cruelty and wickedness is this man carried by his greed.

VERSES 29-40:

Now see its arrant folly.

Tamen, nevertheless; how sharp it rings! ‘Fool, art thou so blind? In thy rapacity knowest thou not that there is one more rapacious thanthou? Aye, and he waits for thee—**manet**,

¹ For the greed which snatches its acreage from the sea cf. also iii. 1. 33 and iii. 24. 3.

² ‘Baiae was the Brighton of Rome, and the whole coast from Baiae to Puteoli was studded with villas’ (Page, on iii. 4. 24). The foundations of these are still to be seen.

³ Stones placed at the four corners of a plot of land to indicate that the boundary was under the protection of the god Terminus.

‘Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour’s landmark.’—Deut. xxvii. 17.

⁴ The Lex. XII Tab. enacted, ‘patronus si clienti fraudem fecerit, sacer esto.’—viii. 21.

the all-devouring Grave, **rapacis Orci**. In contrast to thy fevered haste to be rich and increase thy goods, lo! the Grave waits, waits patiently for thee: **manet**.

'Of all that can be reckoned as certain nothing is more certain than this: **nulla certior aula**. There it abides and waits for thee: **aula manet rapacis Orci**.'

What irony in that word, **aula**, suggestive as it is of the wide entrance hall of the rich man's house: **divitem erum**.

'All that is now thine, that occupied so great a space, must be contracted to the limit of the narrow grave, a limit which neither force nor craft can overstep: **fine destinata**.

'**Quid ultra tendis?** Why aim at more and ever more if this be true, as true it is? No larger space of earth is opened up for thee, none for the heirs of kings than for that poor man: **aequa tellus recluditur**. Maybe, his stalwart bulk will have more than thou wilt need to hide thy puny frame.'

'In any case, Death, the great leveller, is at hand; and in this, her last bestowal, Mother Earth is fair and equal in her gifts to all her children be they rich or poor.

'And, once a captive, there is no escape.

'Craft and gold, which work such wonders here on earth, can avail nought to release thee from yonder prison-house. Wert thou a very **Prometheus** for shrewd foreseeing wisdom it would serve thee nought. Dost mind thee how his gold and guile were lost upon old Charon, ferryman of the dead—**satelles Orci**—and how he found no passage back across the river of Hades?

'Great **Tantalus** of old was proud, but neither he nor any of his race escaped; they abide in durance still.

'And to this day the Grave is deaf to every prayer; or, if thou wilt, he hears, besought or unbesought, the poor man's cry of heavy pain, and when his work is done kind Death² lifts off his load:

**hic levare functum
pauperem laboribus
vocatus atque non vocatus audit.**

'Bethink thee, then. That narrow grave awaits thee too, to curb thy greed.'

¹ My park, my walks, my manors that I had,
Even now forsake me; and of all my lands
Is nothing left me but my body's length.

Henry VI, pt. iii. 5. 2.

² O Death! the poor man's dearest friend—
The kindest and the best!
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee to rest!
The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn;
But, oh! a blest relief to those
That weary-laden mourn!—BURNS.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. III CAR. I

LIB. III CAR. I

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo ;
favete linguis : carmina non prius
audita Musarum sacerdos
virginibus puerisque canto.

regum timendorum in proprios greges, 5
reges in ipsos imperium est Iovis,
clari Giganteo triumpho,
cuncta supercilio moventis.

est ut viro vir latius ordinet
arbusta sulcis, hic generosior 10
descendat in Campum petitor,
moribus hic meliorque fama

contendat, illi turba clientium
sit maior : aequa lege Necessitas
sortitur insignes et imos ; 15
omne capax movet urna nomen.

destrictus ensis cui super impia
cervice pendet, non Siculae dapes
dulcem elaborabunt saporem,
non avium citharaeque cantus 20

somnum reducent : somnus agrestium
lenis virorum non humiles domos
fastidit umbrosamque ripam,
non Zephyris agitata Tempe.

desiderantem quod satis est neque
tumultuosum sollicitat mare
nec saevus Arcturi cadentis
impetus aut orientis Haedi,

25

non verberatae grandine vineae
fundusque mendax, arbore nunc aquas
culpante, nunc torrentia agros
sidera, nunc hiemes iniquas.

30

contracta pisces aequora sentiunt
iactis in altum molibus; huc frequens
caementa demittit redemptor
cum famulis dominusque terrae

35

fastidiosus: sed Timor et Minae
scandunt eodem quo dominus, neque
decedit aerata triremi et
post equitem sedet atra Cura.

40

quodsi dolentem nec Phrygius lapis
nec purpurarum sidere clarior
delenit usus nec Falerna
vitis Achaemeniumque costum,

cur invidendis postibus et novo
sublime ritu moliar atrium?
cur valle permutem Sabina
divitias operosiores?

45

BOOK III ODE I

CONTRASTED AMBITIONS

'How much,' sayd he, 'more happie is the state
In which ye, father, here doe dwell at ease,
Leading a life so free and fortunate
From all the tempests of these worldly seas.'
'Surely, my sonne,' then answer'd he againe,
'If happie; then it is in this intent,
'That having small yet doe I not complaine
Of want, ne wish for more it to augment,
But doe myselfe, with that I have, content;
So taught of nature, which doth little need
Of forreine helpes to lifes due nourishment:
The fields my food, my flocke my rayment breed;
No better doe I weare, no better doe I feed.
'Therefore I doe not any one envy,
Nor am envyde of any one therefore:
They, that have much, feare much to loose thereby,
And store of cares doth follow riches store.'

SPENSER.

THE ODE IN GENERAL.—The opening stanza is of the nature of an introduction to the book, and especially to the first six odes—the great odes which give Horace's chief message to his times. These form a series of almost prophetic utterances, characterized by a pronounced tone of elevation, dignity and solemnity. Here, too, the Odes reach their highest level of moral teaching; they exemplify the Roman temper at its noblest, where, in a pure and lofty patriotism, its ethical spirit culminates.

VERSES 1-4:

The sacredness of the subject and the seriousness of the spirit in which the poet deals with it are very manifest in the opening lines. We have here, not the mere poet's prelude to his songs, but the poet rising to the height of his vocation as *Musarum sacerdos*. High priest of the Muses, he utters his oracle in song from his seat in their temple.

The first line is a solemn, authoritative proclamation. He warns off from the sanctuary the promiscuous and uninitiated crowd: *odi profanum vulgus et arceo*.

Odi expresses the abhorrence of a pure soul for the profane

and polluted. Holy words must be spoken to those alone who can receive them, to the pure in heart.

The added clause, *et arceo*, imbues the abhorrence with that tone of authority with which one of Israel's high priests might speak; or, since the authority is moral rather than official, with which her prophets spake. The dismissal is authoritative.

The place of the *sacerdos* is at the seat of purity and righteousness; there he is enthroned. It is not that, abhorring evil, he himself retires and withdraws from all contact with it; rather here, seated in the sanctuary of the heavenly Muses, does he banish from its precincts the *profanum vulgus*.

Then to those who remain the same authoritative voice, using a familiar but significant phrase, enjoins silence. *Favete linguis*.¹ 'The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him.'

In Horace's phrase there is the implied suggestion that reverential silence is, under certain circumstances, the highest use to which we can put the faculty of speech. So in the vision of Isaiah: 'Above Him stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain (only) he did fly.' Reverent stillness appears to rank as two-thirds of active service.

Silence is often indeed golden where speech is but silver. But only those who have tongues wherewith to speak can use the grace of silence. So here, in *favete linguis*, a phrase, which in the first instance would seem to signify gracious speech and song, reaches a higher sense in that which prepares for both, in the silence that reverentially listens. He speaks best who listens first.

'Listen, then,' the poet cries, 'to songs; yet not of love and wine and revelry; to songs with a character unique: *carmina non prius audita*.' It is the poetry of prophecy which is thus described.

The speech of a prophet is ever poetic. Under the breath of inspiration speech instinctively becomes rhythmic, and *Musarum sacerdos* will now pour forth his message in song.

Canto, (a frequentative) 'my vocation is that of a singer of sacred song to the pure'.

¹ εὐφημος πᾶς ἔστω λαός,
στόμα συγκλήσας· ἐπιδημεῖ γὰρ
θίαςος Μουσῶν ἔνδον μελᾶθρων
τῶν δεσποσύνων μελοποιῶν.—ARISTOPH. Thesmoph. 39.

dicamus bona verba: venit Natalis ad aras:
quisquis ades, lingua, vir mulierque, fave.

TIBULLUS, ii. 2. 1. 2.

But for 'pure' he uses, poet-like, the concrete *virginibus puerisque*. 'To young men and maidens in the early dawn of manhood and womanhood, for whom the springs of life are untainted—to these alone am I charged to sing.'

There lies a certain shadow upon this verse, for alas! it is vain to address holy words to the hardened and polluted. 'Heaven lies about us in our infancy. To young, fresh hearts, pure, tender and susceptible, quick to love and trust and quick therefore to learn—to these my song may speak.'

VERSES 5-8:

This elevation of tone, characteristic of sacred temple worship, is carried forward into stanza two. The eye glances round the wide earth with its diverse races and tribes and nations of men, each with its several ruler and king. Then it gazes upwards to the over-arching vault of heaven where lives and reigns 'the King of kings and Lord of lords'.

Around are dreaded kings—*regum timendorum*—each invested with a brief authority over his own people; the limit of his land is the limit of his sway. And as the seer's mind rests on the ideal of kingship, to the idea of authority there is appended, at least by suggestion, an ancient and tender attribute of kings, who are *ποιμένες λαῶν*, shepherds of their peoples. For *timendorum* is supplemented and softened by *in proprios greges*; ruling, they also guide, feed, protect their subject peoples.

Then the eyes are uplifted and the range expands till the supreme fountain of all authority comes into view—great Jove's *imperium* which claims these very kings and makes of them his righteous deputies and vicegerents. Here we have precisely the Hebrew conception, 'King of kings and Lord of lords.'

Then, in two pregnant lines, the glory of this *imperium* of the King supreme is given. The dim legendary past, with its memories of violence and chaos, is touched and pierced; and in contrast shines out a living present where the rule of the great Father is serene and absolute.

Time was when the race of earth-born giants waged impious war with heaven's King; but long since the victory was won, and those monster rebels lay crushed. That was the triumph won by force of arm and crashing thunderbolt.

But ages have passed since the thunders of that struggle were hushed, and now 'tis no strain of might that sways the world; the image now presented is that of the perfect serenity of unquestioned will. The whole world is swayed without effort by the supreme Mind. It is not the hand, nor the arm

now, but the brow which symbolizes the source and spring of power: **cuncta supercilio**¹ **moventis**.

Here there is a subtle blending of conceptions, combined with consummate art. The physical and the moral, the material and the spiritual, are both delicately pictured. 'Two worlds are ours.'

We glance through the ages to the era that preceded the habitable world and we behold the savage scene when the fair, green and fruitful earth, with its pasturage and tillage, its meadows and gardens, had not yet come into being. We catch a glimpse of the world rent by convulsions of sea and land as the giant elemental forces raged uncontrolled, ere yet the fixed constitution and smooth course of nature had emerged from the chaos of the pre-adamite age.

But now the sovereign Might has triumphed and we behold the ordered world—the Cosmos—with its circling seasons, where Summer and Winter, earing and harvest, fail not.

With this conception is subtly interwoven that of the progress of mankind in civilization, from the age when might was right and brute force the one spring of government to the time when 'mind' is recognized as the supreme authority—when intelligence guides and wisdom governs all, and when these so permeate the whole scheme of things that effort is no longer required.

All this is perfectly expressed in the three words: **cuncta supercilio moventis**. This is the glory—**claritudo**—of the King of kings. 'The Lord reigneth: let the earth rejoice.'

VERSES 9-14^A:

In stanza three the age of kings has passed; it is Republican Rome that fills the field of vision.

The poet notes, as he is fond of doing, the diverse ambitions of men competing with one another for a poor pre-eminence.

Again, as ever, all is picturesque. Wide possessions form one man's claim to distinction. But Horace must throw this into picture; and so we see a man vying with his neighbour in laying out his land and planting his fruit-bearing trees. His secret joy is given in **latius**. 'Ah! my vineyards and orchards are on a larger scale than his.'

To another, the career of political distinction is the chosen way to eminence and a life fulfilled. Again all is vividly presented to the eye. We see the candidate for public

¹ ἧ καὶ κυανέησιν ἐπ' ὀφρύσι νεῦσε Κρονίων
ἀμβρόσιαι δ' ἄρα χαῖται ἐπερρώσαντο ἄνακτος
κρατὸς ἀπ' ἀθανάτοιο· μέγαν δ' ἐλέλιξεν Ὀλυμπον

honours descend, self-conscious and elate, into the arena—the **Campus**¹—at election times.

High birth is his claim. The secret joy and pride lie again in the comparative; but this time it is **generosior**. He bears an old name which implies, at any rate, descent from some one of the Fathers of old Rome; surely he will carry the day against any upstart *novus homo*.

But, see, here steps forward one whose rank and claim rest on no mere lineage, for a fool may inherit a wise man's name, and birth may but cover a worthless scion of a noble house. Here is one whose claim is character, and that his own—what he is, and is known to be; for **moribus** is crowned by **fama**. Herein lies this man's strength, and his equipment for the contest.

Then, last, a grosser claim is made, which needs no fine discrimination to estimate and judge. See the throng of those who call this man, 'lord'! He can command that which may roughly brush aside competitors—**turba clientium**. **Turba**—a touch of Horatian irony—a promiscuous mob! However, with these to clear his way, the great man may give the go-by to nice claims of lineage or of character.

VERSES 14^B–24:

So the word picture, with its panelled cameos, is complete, and Horace strikes once more his familiar note. Through all the differences and varieties of human lot exhibited on this stage where men play their parts, acting life's tragedies and comedies, where petty ambitions work out their successes or their failures, see, rising high above and over-arching the whole scene, like the vault of heaven where reigns the King of kings, a *lex suprema* which is **aequa lex**. **Necessitas**, the Greek *Ἀνάγκη*, a giant figure dark and dread, ever lying in the background of classic thought—Destiny—that which must be—ever overshadows, not mortal men alone and their petty pursuits, but even the desires and volitions of the gods themselves.

To this dread Power supreme the poet refers the issues of all these human competitions for place and power. 'Destiny' it is that allots to each his station—highest, lowest; distinguished or obscure: **sortitur insignes et imos**.

There stands her symbol, the mighty urn. And this urn of Destiny, in which is found the name of every man, is ever being shaken—**movet**—and there leaps out the lot of each.

But even if that lot be prosperity, be success, or wealth, or luxury, yet is it not altogether unalloyed. For prosperity

¹ The Campus Martius.

itself is poisoned for many a 'happy' man by a sense of guilt—*impietas*—lying at the centre of his life. A peril impends which stings and kills all his delight. Ah! 'Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.'

The lesson is illustrated by the story¹ of the Sicilian tyrant which furnishes material for the next picture. The limner paints for us the luxury of elaborated sensuous delight, by day, by night; the luxury of the *recherché* banquet; the luxury of soft repose. Both are poisoned by remorse, and by the fear of sudden vengeance for past crime.

See the labour and skill and expense lavished on the feast to tempt the sluggish appetite, the jaded palate:

*Siculae dapes
dulcem elaborabunt saporem.*

Yet all in vain this profligate waste.

See, the dark word, *non*.

Ah! no enjoyment even of this base sort is his. As he bends to the table, all too conscious is he, the while, of that sharp glittering blade suspended by a hair above him—*destrictus ensis*—which at any moment may fall and cut short in blood his impious course: *super impia cervice*.

And when night comes—blessed night which brings even to the slave a brief remission of toil and hardship in sleep—to this man of wealth and power sweet sleep will not come.

Non: again the fatal word.

Vain, again, are all the poor elaborations of luxury. Soft and low let the music be of harp, or of singing birds from the far off aviaries, sleep, 'Nature's sweet restorer,' will not be wooed. No ministry to 'a mind diseased', a conscience ill at ease, lies in such poor tricks:

*non avium citharaeque cantus
somnum reducent.*

And then the counterfoil: a picture of rustic simplicity, of innocence and peace.

Beneath yon low roofs, beyond the palace-bounds, lie labouring men whose rest² is sweet. Gracious is sleep to these, nor scorns the lowly hut:

*somnus agrestium
lenis virorum non humiles domos
fastidit.*

Nay, even in the noonday pause the toiler may lay him down beneath some spreading tree, on some chance bank by the field where he stoops to his toil, and the soft west wind,

¹ It is told by Cicero: Tusc. v. 61, 62.

² 'The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the fulness of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.'—Eccles. v. 12.

gently sweeping along **Tempe's** beauteous vale, will fan him to rest. Upon this tired labourer will gracious sleep breathe her balm of peace.

VERSES 25-32:

'Ah! learn this, ye young men and maidens: the secret of happy days and restful nights is found in the soul within.' In 'sweet content'—**desiderantem quod satis est**—lies the secret of restful calm, of tranquillity of soul. Let a man perceive but this and hold in curb and check his wandering desires; then, though storm shall visit sea and land, his spirit will abide in peace.

So, in his wonted fashion, Horace paints two pictures: one of wild tossing waters, the other of desolated fields.

In the first he recalls the travelling merchant, keen after gain. Ploughing with frail bark the vexed and raging sea—**tumultuosum mare**—with anxious heart he scans the heaven. The rising and setting of the constellations are the mariner's almanac, and he reads therein the signs of storm—**Arcturi¹ cadentis, orientis Haedi**. He is late; the gracious sailing stars, the Pleiades, have set; the **Haedi**, ominous of wind and rain, have risen. There is risk, and the keen trader is distraught with dread.

And so, in the companion picture, we have the agriculturist, a man of like temper but of different pursuit. His mind too is set on gain. Torn with rage he sees his vines lashed by the pelting hail—**verberatae grandine vineae**—he sees the crops that had promised so fair lie ruined, sodden with rain or parched by heat, and he curses the **fundus mendax** that has played him false.

His orchards too disappoint his hopes. He fumes and storms, though the very trees protest that it is not their fault; 'tis the torrential rains—'tis the Dog Star's scorching heat—'tis the hard winter; these, 'tis these, have wrought the havoc.

But, be it as it may, the hope of gain is cut off; he is balked on his road to wealth; and the covetous man sighs and groans and imprecates his curses on the heavens above and on the earth beneath.

VERSES 33-44:

Then once again the poet turns to the case of the extravagant and luxurious man and touches a familiar theme

¹ nam Arcturus signum sum omnium acerrimum:
vehemens sum exoriens, quom occido vehementior.

PLAUT. Rudens 70.

—extravagance in building. A busy scene is presented to us. The contractor and his men at work—**frequens redemptor cum famulis**—hurried on by the great man who will have his palace-home built out upon the sea.

For indeed he is impatient of the limits imposed by the land—**dominus terrae fastidiosus**.¹

We hear the deep-resounding splash of the masses of rock and rubble hurled into the waters to make a foundation for the lofty pile: **iactis in altum molibus**.

In humorous wise is pictured the consternation of the denizens of the sea, the finny tribes, who feel their realm encroached upon and contracted by the unnatural extravagance and pride of man: **contracta pisces aequora sentiunt**. Presumptuous pride violates nature's order

But look again, there is more than mere pride of luxury. At the very heart of all lies guilt, conscious guilt and the sting of an evil conscience with haunting dread of vengeance—**Timor et Minae**.

This lordly palace with its towers and battlements, cut off from all approach by land, was hurried on with some vague sense of its becoming a fortress and a refuge whither the evil doer may flee and find safety. Vain hope! We see the owner hurrying up the secret staircase to the central tower; but at his heels glide up those ghostly forms of which he never can be rid:

**Timor et Minae
scandunt eodem quo dominus.**

These haunt his secret soul till the terror deepens and ere long one cry² bursts from his heart. It is for escape—escape from the very refuge his own hands have made, and made at such extravagant cost.

Escape! escape! by sea or land—let it be by swift ship

¹ This idea supplements that of ii. 18. 22:

parum locuples continente ripa,

where the motive is greed, whereas here it is ennui.

² 'What! is not this my place of strength,' she said,

'My spacious mansion built for me,

Whereof the strong foundation-stones were laid

Since my first memory?'

But in dark corners of her palace stood

Uncertain shapes; and unawares

On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of blood,

And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,

And, with dim fretted foreheads all,

On corpses three-months-old at noon she came,

That stood against the wall.—TENNYSON, *The Palace of Art*.

with brazen prow, built for war and speed, or on fleet charger.¹

In vain! all in vain! Black Care cleaves to the vessel—
neque decedit aerata triremi. Neither strength nor speed
avails; behind the horseman crouches, sitting close and
clinging fast, that same 'black Care': **post equitem sedet
atra Cura.**

'Look well then to these things, ye who are beginning life,
who as yet are pure in heart and clean in hand, ye **virgines
puerique**, to whom I, **Musarum sacerdos**, do sing.'

VERSES 45-48:

And now there comes a reflective pause. The prophetic singer addresses his own soul. 'Yea, and I who sing will take home the lesson to myself.

'To me too it speaks, and let this be for me the conclusion of the whole matter. If luxury and wealth can minister nought to a mind diseased nor soothe the pangs of a conscience ill at ease, why change, or wish to change, my modest home among the Sabine hills for the magnificence and splendour which are but a vain show?'

So again he summons up in terse detail his picture of the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

'Vain those rare and costly marbles; vain those robes of gleaming purple, the lustre of colour and of gems that outshine the stars; vain the costly wines which grace the banquet; vain the sweet spices from the far East—vain and helpless all to lift from a burdened heart its lightest care.

'Then why be a fool to lend myself to vanity? Why follow the mode in its latest fashion? Why toil to rear on high a many-towered palace-home, whose pillared entrance will but invite the scowl of envy?

'Why, oh, why exchange my rustic upland farm² for wealth that cumbereth life and makes of its burdens a heavier load?'

**cur valle permutem Sabina
divitias operosiores?**

Nay, innocence, a good conscience and sweet content—these, and these alone, lend true strength and sweetness to a human life.

¹ scandit aeratas vitiosa naves
Cura nec turmas equitum relinquit,
ocior cervis et agente nimbos
ocior Euro.—ii. 16. 21.

² 'Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with the food that is needful for me:
Lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say,
Who is the Lord?
Or lest I be poor, and steal,
And use profanely the name of my God.'—Prov. xxx. 8, 9.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. III CAR. II

LIB. III CAR. II

Angustam amice pauperiem pati
robustus acri militia puer
condiscat et Parthos feroces
vexet eques metuendus hasta

vitamque sub divo et trepidis agat
in rebus. illum ex moenibus hosticis
matrona bellantis tyranni
prospiciens et adulta virgo

suspiret, cheu, ne rudis agminum
sponsus lacessat regius asperum
tactu leonem, quem cruenta
per medias rapit ira caedes.

dulce et decorum est pro patria mori :
mors et fugacem persequitur virum,
nec parcit imbellis iuventae
poplitibus timidove tergo. 15

Virtus repulsae nescia sordidae
intaminatis fulget honoribus,
nec sumit aut ponit secures
arbitrio popularis aurae.

Virtus, recludens immeritis mori
caelum, negata temptat iter via,
coetusque vulgares et udam
spernit humum fugiente penna.

est et fideli tuta silentio

25

merces : vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum

vulgarit arcanæ, sub isdem

sit trabibus fragilemque mecum

solvat phaselon : saepe Diespiter

neglectus incesto addidit integrum :

30

raro antecedentem scelestum

deseruit pede Poena claudo.

BOOK III ODE II

MANHOOD

Behold the life at ease ; it drifts.
The sharpened life commands its course.
She (Nature) winnows, winnows roughly ; sifts,
To dip her chosen in her source :
Contention is the vital force,
Whence pluck they brain, her prize of gifts,
Sky of the senses ! on which height,
Not disconnected, yet released,
They see how spirit comes to light,
Through conquest of the inner beast,
Which Measure tames to movement sane,
In harmony with what is fair.

GEORGE MEREDITH.

If the first ode is, in general form, an introduction to the true Roman ideal of manhood, emphasizing the simple virtue of modest contentment, this second ode goes to the very core of the characteristic virtue of the citizen-soldier of Rome.

The connexion between the two odes is natural and close, for a true contentment, though it may seem a modest and passive virtue, yet implies width and depth of character. At its centre is that just estimate of the relative worth of things, which is the last attainment of one whose whole intellectual aim has been 'to see life steadily and see it whole'.

A noble moderation implies perfect self-control inspired by a passion for all that is really great. It is guided in its exercise by a just estimate of life, its possibilities, its limitations, its illusions, its snares and perils. Here in Horace we see these portrayed, albeit shadowed by a constant sense of an all-controlling, all-subduing Destiny, and bounded by Death which was to him the ultima linea rerum.

In this ode the doctrine is enforced that so high a level of living can only be attained through the discipline of early training and this of a rigorous kind. The foundations must be early laid if character is to be deeply based and is to rise to high achievement. The yoke must be borne in youth if manhood is to be worthy of freedom.

That noble content on which the poet had been dwelling is

after all but the fully ripened fruit of this early severity of training, while habits simple and hardy are exhibited as the base and spring of true courage, the manly *virtus* which goes to the making of the patriot Roman be he soldier or citizen.

VERSES I-6^A :

The opening verse is packed with meaning. So compact is it indeed and so tersely expressed as only to suggest pictures ; it does not even etch them in barest outline. Were they painted they would be scenes from the life of Roman boyhood and would in no wise differ whether the lad were born to wealth or poverty. It is the word, *puer*, which strikes the key-note. Boyhood, this is the *fons et origo* ; thence must all begin.

We see then the stripling of seventeen, having passed from the earliest rule of home—the stern rule of the *mater severa*—entered for military training : *puer condiscat*.

From boyhood let him learn ; but his learning must be in Roman fashion, not by rote from book or teacher. The great lesson of obedience and endurance must be learnt in the sharp school of a soldier's discipline, at first in the camp, but ere long carried forward into actual warfare : *acri militia*. By this curriculum there is wrought out in him a frame well-knit, toughness and suppleness of muscle, alertness of eye and hand, steadiness of nerve, until at length this *puer* shall come forth from his stern school, *robustus* :

*robustus acri militia puer
condiscat.*

'To suffer and be strong'—*pati*—this is the first great lesson of all, to bear the straits of privation and its wholesome stints. Then may he reach the very crown of hardihood and find in endurance and privation a friend : *angustam amice pauperiem pati*.

Here we see the grand positive of all those negatives in the last ode that throw scorn upon the love of ease and upon luxury with all its soft indulgences. This boy has grown into a noble manhood ; he has no taste for soft delights ; the hardships and the vigils, the sudden perils and alarms of dangerous warfare, he has learnt to love.

This truly is a noble height and level of living, yet no otherwise attainable than by this steep and rugged path : *acri militia*. But the height once gained, the level reached, there he loves henceforth to dwell and to live out his life. The straits of poverty, a friend ! *amice*.

Surely our Christian ideal should assume into itself this hardy simplicity of fortitude, yet surely also in so

assuming will transfigure it. Let St. Paul, the great exemplar of Christian chivalry, the 'good soldier of Christ Jesus', testify and teach us how.

'I have learned contentment,' he cries—the noble *αὐτάρκεια*—'I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: . . . to be filled and to be hungry'. 'I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content' (*αὐτάρκῃς*).

Here indeed is a master of circumstance. We catch here the note of the proud self-reliance of the Roman, *civis Romanus sum*.

But with the Apostle this noble independence has its root in absolute dependence, and at its centre glows an absolute surrender and devotion to the Lord he loved. Elsewhere he sings a glorious paean of sufferings endured. The good soldier of Jesus Christ endures hardness; glorying in suffering he is in love with danger and death, but it is for His dear sake.

But reverting to Horace, we see next this stripling, now grown to hardy manhood, standing before us a soldier complete—*eques metuendus hasta*—the practised horseman, the sinewy, agile, skilful spearsman.

The passive fortitude that had learned to suffer—*pati*—bears now its fruit in active courage and skill. He is a warrior whom all foemen dread to meet—*metuendus*—who can harass and rout the fierce Parthians—*Parthos feroces vexet*—the poet's type of Rome's most dangerous enemies.

Nor is he only an occasional soldier; campaigning is his very life. He loves to dwell *sub divo*, out in the open beneath unsheltered skies.

Like the bronzed veteran on the South African veldt he scorns the cover of tent or fortress. Out in all weathers, exposed to sun and wind and lashing storm, there let him with a fierce delight live out his life: *vitam sub divo . . . agat*.

One other touch is needed to complete the picture. To the hazards of nature in the wilds must be added the perils of warfare, dangers from sudden assault and lurking ambush: *vitam . . . trepidis agat in rebus*.

Thus then is pictured for us the sharp school in which the youth of Rome must find their training and win equipment for the Roman's all-comprehending duty—devotion to the State, to the majesty of Rome. Here in this ingrained type of character we find unveiled the secret of Rome's mighty empire. In the *ingenium Romanum* we discover the inner reason of the *imperium Romanum*.

It is revealed in the discipline of the legions and no less in the logical structure of a Latin sentence. As the former

suffers no insubordinate soldier so will the latter endure no insubordinate word. Here we recognize the part that Rome has played in the history and in the education of the world. Its hidden spring is found, not in learning or culture, not in art, science, or philosophy for which she possessed no genius; but in hardy manhood braced to its utmost strength by discipline and danger and then devoted to the service of the state we see disclosed the Roman ideal.

VERSES 6^B-12:

But now Horace proceeds to picture the man in the prime of his strength, activity, courage and skill, conspicuous among all compeers: *illum* is an emphatic demonstrative.

In a moment we are transported to a battle scene. The storm of bloody war rages around the walls and towers of a beleaguered city, the capital and stronghold of some king at war with Rome.

Bellantis tyranni renders the stirring scene from the Roman side; but straightway we are made to look upon it with the eyes of certain anxious watchers from the walls,¹ *ex moenibus hosticis*. Dread is in their eyes as they follow the movements of their royal prince betrothed to that fair young bride who, with her lady-mother, peers forth with trembling upon the fray.

A sigh is heard as they gaze. Ah! should this gay carpet-knight, gallant in all his bravery of soldierly equipment, chance to cross the path of yon veteran captain; alas! what shall then betide? Oh! see the foeman yonder, like some kingly lion roused to bloody wrath, careering through the battle-field in a very rapture of rage, his course marked by heaps of slain:

*quem cruenta
per medias rapit ira caedes.*

And as they gaze these trembling women breathe a silent prayer, 'God send our darling meet not yon fierce warrior, yon savage lion whom to touch were death'—*asperum tactu leonem*. This picture exhibits the culminating point of the soldier's glory in victory, the full fruitage of all that long, stern, sharp discipline. We see the finished soldier whom 'twere sure defeat to meet in combat. Where the fight goes fiercest, there is his stalwart figure seen in the midst. Ever in mad career his martial rage, a very rapture, hurries him on: *cruenta rapit ira*.

¹ Compare Virgil:

tum muros varia cinxere corona
matronae puerique.—Aen. xi. 475.

So Homer, of Helen on the walls of Troy: Il. iii. 154.

VERSES 13-16:

In the fourth stanza the crown of gallantry, reserved for this citizen-soldier of Rome, is won.

A sudden turn in the movement of the poem carries us to its highest point. Here is courage undaunted, strength, agility and skill against which none may stand; all these are here.

But is victory always granted to these? Nay, not always surely! Overmatched, the bravest may fall beneath a fatal blow. A stray arrow may strike and kill; at any moment death may be his lot.

Well be it so. Is the avoidance of death—death the universal lot—the end supreme?

And death in victory! with honour safe! honour and Rome!

Nay, *pro patria mori*!¹ this is no death; rather it is the very crown of life—life made perfect. So to die is sweet and glorious: *dulce et decorum est*.

Hitherto no words bespeak such a prize as these: *dulce, decus*. Here the true Roman spirit kindles to pure white. All idle Epicurean sentiment is burnt up in that flame.

'Success,' as men deem it, is mostly ignoble be it ever so sweet. The pleasure-seeker's life is neither sweet nor noble; but death for one's fatherland, this is sweet and glorious indeed.

Death awaits us all. This thought is ever on the poet's lips. But here death is a prize; a prize which falls to few.

But ere he leaves the field of blood Horace sets a foil, as is his wont, to his etching of the perfect soldier.

Again the eye falls upon the battle-field, but the figure presented is that of the coward who will not stand and fight, but flees. A man he seemed—*virum*; but see, he flees—*virum fugacem*. That is no 'man' who will save his poor recreant life by flight.

Ah, but look again; vain as it is ignoble is the frantic dash for life. There is one in pursuit who will overtake; Death is at the coward's heels. Death, who struck down the hero standing his ground, will strike *et fugacem virum*.

But the death-wound shall be not in front as with the brave. As, with knees trembling under him, he hurries from the scene, struck from behind, he dies:

*imbellis iuventae
poplitibus timidove tergo.*

¹ 'o fortunata mors, quae naturae debita pro patria est potissimum reddita!'—CICERO, Philipp. xiv. 31.

Bitter and shameful is such a death, not *dulce et decorum*—beautiful and sweet.

VERSES 17-24:

But listen! the poet's strain rises still higher as the great all-inclusive word is sounded. *Virtus* strikes the keynote of stanza five; *virtus*, a word which covers all that befits a man—valour of the truly brave indeed, but more; all moral quality besides, stainless honour, purity and strength of soul.

Thus, penetrating deeper, the poet exhibits that pure spirit of nobleness which can never under any circumstances suffer defeat. That brave captain just portrayed, victor in many fields, may one day meet his fate, though with all honour, and die a soldier brave but nothing more.

But that which lies behind and beneath the patriot's courage in the field finds here as large a scope in civil, as there in military, life.

The arena of political life is touched, and here Horace teaches that, as on the battle-field death for the fatherland ranks as the very crown of life so that sweet and beautiful it is to die, so here in the world of political rivalry true virtue, even in rejection, knows nothing of dishonour: *repulsæ nescia sordidae*. And so after all there is reality in that much-abused phrase, 'a moral victory,' for a victory may be won even in the hour of defeat.

Thus here, in our poet's verse, is the *civis* on a par of honour with the *miles*. Defeated at the polls because he will resort to no corruption to win his election, he wears his honours still—honours unsoiled, nay, shining out in the dark hour by their own pure lustre: *intaminatis fulget honoribus*.

A universal truth meets us here and carries the ode to its highest note. A pure ambition is never finally foiled. The essential glory gleams forth—*fulget*—even in rejection. Was not 'the Prince of Life' Himself the 'rejected of men'?

The deep significance of that most coveted of all a brave soldier's distinctions, the 'Victoria Cross', shines out as we think of the Crucified One, victor over death and the grave, His name 'above every name'.

But the verse moves on. Virtue's insignia of rank and authority are not conditionally held. 'Tis not the poor breath of popular caprice that can either give them or take them away. There breathes an ineffable contempt in the lines,

*nec sumit aut ponit secures
arbitrio popularis auræ.*¹

¹ Horace describes Lollius as '*consul non unius anni*' (iv. 9. 39), and of Maecenas he writes:

liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum.—Ep. i. 1. 107.

On popular favour indeed depend the honours of a democratic state; but Virtue has her warrant whence she has her source—in that heaven above which now in stanza six opens to our view.

Caelum carries us beyond that closing scene of death in victory on the battle-field. Behold, heaven opens to those who, deserving not to die, find the earthly road to honour blocked. For Virtue there is a way, a way denied to all but her: **negata temptat iter via.**

For Virtue can 'mount up with wings as eagles', her home is on high, though here below, 'tis true, are found her work and strife.

Thus we have a vision of the pure soul, the soul whose purity is its very life, thrust back by the jostling crowd which elbows its way along the muddy tracks of a sordid world and trampled down at last in death; yet in that instant she soars aloft on flying pinion, spurning both mob and mire, to heaven's gate:

**coetusque vulgares et udam
spernit humum fugiente penna.**

VERSES 25-32 :

The word, **caelum**, marks the culminating point of the ode, which now gently declines in its closing stanzas.

The theme is still the heavenly **virtus**, but now on its passive side; that upon which, however, all its activity and effort rest.

The springs of true courage and endurance are nourished in the silent¹ depths. There is a time and place for the patriot's honourable strife on the battle-field and in political life, but time and place no less for the sealed lips which shall betray no trust. For this man too there abides a sure reward:

**est et fideli tuta silentio
merces.**

It is interesting to note that it is with this man especially that the poet, in his closing lines, associates himself. 'No comradeship for me,' he cries, 'with a traitor to his trust—one who, admitted to the sacred mysteries, would go forth and bruit them all abroad. False to the heavenly powers, such can be no true patriot and shall be no companion of mine!'

¹ 'Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together; that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of Life, which they are thenceforth to rule. Not William the Silent only, but all the considerable men I have known . . . forbore to babble of what they were creating and projecting.'—Sartor Resartus iii.

Aye, and let the innocent take heed, for there is peril if the guiltless consort with the guilty. 'A companion of fools shall be destroyed.'

How striking, in Psalm I, are those graded negatives which make blessedness hinge upon separateness from the wicked. 'Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.'

Similarly, Horace urges his warning: 'I will not sit under the same roof with him against whom the gods are wroth.' The roof-tree may fall crashing in and shelter turn to death.

'Nor will I share the frail skiff' if he embark.'

Bethink thee! reader. Heedlessness is an offence against Heaven, and may confound in one doom the righteous with the wicked.

And let no wicked man think he shall escape. The Avenger may seem to linger long, and, lame of foot, lag far behind the guilty one's swift flight, yet keeps he ever on the track, and, at the fated hour, his stroke is sure.

¹ ἡ γὰρ συνεισβάς πλοῖον εὐσεβὴς ἀνὴρ
ναῦταισι θερμοῖς καὶ πανουργίᾳ τινὶ
ὄλωλεν ἀνδρῶν ξὺν θεοπτύστῳ γένει,
ἡ ξὺν πολίταις ἀνδράσιν δίκαιος ὦν
ἐχθροζένοισ τε καὶ θεῶν ἀμνήμοισιν,
ταῦτοῦ κυρήσας ἐκδίκους ἀγρεύματος,
πληγεῖς θεοῦ μάστιγι παγκοίνῳ δάμη.

ÆSCHYL. Septem c. Thebas 602.

μήτ' ἐμοὶ παρέστιος

γένεοιτο μήτ' ἴσον φρονῶν ὅς τάδ' ἔρδει.—SOPH. Ant. 374.

'What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you.'—Jonah i. 11, 12.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. III CAR. III

LIB. III CAR. III

Iustum et tenacem propositi virum
non civium ardor prava iubentium,
non vultus instantis tyranni
mente quatit solida neque Auster,

dux inquieti turbidus Hadriae, 5
nec fulminantis magna manus Iovis :
si fractus illabatur orbis,
impavidum ferient ruinae.

hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules
enisus arces attigit igneas, 10
quos inter Augustus recumbens
purpureo bibit ore nectar.

hac te merentem, Bacche pater, tuae
vexere tigres indocili iugum
collo trahentes; hac Quirinus 15
Martis equis Acheronta fugit,

gratum elocuta consiliantibus
Iunone divis: ' Ilion, Ilion
fatalis incestusque iudex
et mulier peregrina vertit 20

in pulverem, ex quo destituit deos
mercede pacta Laomedon, mihi
castaeque damnatum Minervae
cum populo et duce fraudulento.

- iam nec Lacaenae splendet adulterae 25
famosus hospes nec Priami domus
periura pugnaces Achivos
Hectoreis opibus refringit,
nostrisque ductum seditionibus
bellum resedit. protinus et graves 30
iras et invisum nepotem,
Troica quem peperit sacerdos,
Marti redonabo; illum ego lucidas
inire sedes, ducere nectaris
sucos et adscribi quietis 35
ordinibus patiar deorum.
- dum longus inter saeviat Ilion
Romanque pontus, qualibet exsules
in parte regnanto beati;
dum Priami Paridisque busto 40
insultet armentum et catulos ferae
celent inultae, stet Capitolium
fulgens triumphatisque possit
Roma ferox dare iura Medis.
- horrenda late nomen in ultimas 45
extendat oras, qua medius liquor
secernit Europen ab Afro,
qua tumidus rigat arva Nilus,
aurum irrepertum et sic melius situm,
cum terra celat, spernere fortior 50
quam cogere humanos in usus
omne sacrum rapiente dextra.
- quicumque mundo terminus obstitit,
hunc tanget armis, visere gestiens,
qua parte debacchentur ignes, 55
qua nebulae pluviique rores.

sed bellicosus fata Quiritibus
hac lege dico, ne nimium pii
rebusque fidentes avitae
tectis velint reparare Troiae. 60

Troiae renascens alite lugubri
fortuna tristi clade iterabitur,
ducente victrices catervas
coniuge me Iovis et sorore.

ter si resurgat murus aeneus 65
auctore Phoebus, ter pereat meus
excisus Argivis, ter uxor
capta virum puerosque ploret.'

non hoc iocosae conveniet lyrae :
quo, Musa, tendis? desine pervicax 70
referre sermones deorum et
magna modis tenuare parvis.

BOOK III ODE III

CONSTANCY

O well for him whose will is strong!
He suffers, but he will not suffer long;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong:
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compassed round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crowned.

TENNYSON.

The first two stanzas exhibit the Roman temper at its noblest. The first line strikes the key-note of the ode. Here the terseness and concentration of the Latin speech are seen at their best. The virtue of the last ode with its stress on discipline—endurance issuing in the true *ἀνδρεία* exhibited in acts of valour on the battle-field and in the arena of politics—is now more sharply moralized. The ethical quality is abruptly introduced.

The image of the first line stands out as though struck from a die of steel. The figure of the *vir iustus*, the righteous man, is there in sharp relief.

Iustum presents to us the central core of noble character. The strength of simple righteousness meets us as a tower of adamant standing four-square, unshaken, immutable, inviolate. Let storm and stress come from what quarter it may¹ the righteous man quails not before force; before the clamorous fury of democratic majorities, the edict of a tyrant, the wild forces of nature, or even the wrath of Heaven itself as it lays a world in ruins, he stands unmoved.

VERSES 1-8:

All is concrete, picturesque as ever.

The first line is even more than a picture; it is a sculptured form—the *vir iustus*, in whose breast abides the *solida mens* which comes later. A clear intelligence lights up this

¹ 'fortis vero animi et constantis est non perturbari in rebus asperis nec tumultuantem de gradu deici, ut dicitur, sed praesenti animo uti et consilio nec a ratione discedere.'—Cic. de Off. i. 80.

adamantine firmness of moral character. This rock is diamond, not opaque but crystalline. Its strength is no mere vis inertiae. It lies not in the doggedness of traditional habit or custom, but is intelligent and active and is strenuously exerted: **tenacem propositi**. This is the bed-rock of what was noblest in Roman character. **Propositum** implies foresight and a clear purpose, while the **tenax** holds it fast let what will oppose.

Many a dissolute man is brave on the battle-field; excitement and passion are his allies. Here is courage of a higher sort, 'a soul well-knit.' The passion and the fury are without, not within the man, or, if passion be there, it is 'condensed to purpose strong'.

Here is a man who has beheld the sacred **Ius** and gazed until he has been transformed into the same image. The everlasting Right comes forth from its remoteness and abstraction and, in some crisis of his experience, embodies and shapes itself in a clear, well-defined resolve. To this he holds with all the might of absolute simplicity and unity and wholeness of soul.

This is the **solida mens**¹—flawless integrity of soul. Let there rage what may around him this is no Dipsychus, no man of double soul.

Four pictures are etched by way of illustration, each in one or two strokes, the outlines being left for us to fill in. Well for us if we have the skill to do it without blurring the lines of the clear-cut cameos. The first, etched in four words, portrays a civic council in furious excitement, lost for the moment to reason and justice, ablaze with passion—**ardor**—which is urging its members to some iniquitous resolution. The citizens are met in lawful assembly—in the Ecclesia or the Forum—acting in their democratic legislative capacity: **civium ardor prava iubentium**.

Here is a sharp test of true courage. Far harder is it to oppose one's fellow-citizens in the assembly than to fight the common foe in the field. But to this man the choice is between **iustum** and **pravum**; and if he stand alone he stands for the former, **mente solida**.

Such is Socrates² in the Ecclesia at Athens when he will

¹ 'quemadmodum proiecti quidam in altum scopuli mare frangunt nec ipsi ulla saevitiae vestigia tot verberati seculis ostentant: ita sapientis animus solidus est et id roboris colligit, ut tam tutus sit ab iniuria quam illa quae retuli.'—SENECA, de Const. iii.

² ἐγὼ γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἄλλην μὲν ἀρχὴν οὐδεμίαν πώποτε ἤρξα ἐν τῇ πόλει, ἐβούλεσσα δὲ καὶ ἔτυχεν ἡμῶν ἡ φυλὴ Ἀντιοχίς πρυτανεύουσα ὅτε ὑμεῖς τοὺς δέκα στρατηγούς τοὺς οὐκ ἀνελομένους τοὺς ἐκ τῆς ναυμαχίας ἐβούλεσθε ἄθροους κρίνειν, παρὰ νόμους, ὡς ἐν τῷ ὑστέρω χρόνῳ πᾶσιν ὑμῖν ἔδοξε. τότε

not put the vote, which he knows to be illegal, to condemn the ten generals *en masse* after Arginusæ. So we have here one man—**virum**—against a multitude inflamed with passion—**civium ardor**—who would use legal forms—**iubentium**—to violate constitutional right—the **Ius**.

In the next verse the scene changes and in three words the picture is given. The autocrat, the tyrant whose single word is law, stands vivid before us.

In his face one may read life or death—death to all who dare resist his will. He threatens, and there stand about him those who will in an instant, at a sign from hand or lip, execute his will : **vultus** ¹ **instantis tyranni**.

Such is that cruel despot Nebuchadnezzar on the plain at Babylon glaring, full of fury, at the three Hebrew youths : ‘O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well ; but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace ; and who is that god that shall deliver you out of my hands ?’ Yet even before such a tyrant this righteous man stands, **solida mente**.

Then in a moment we are made to feel the peril of a storm at sea, to a Roman an experience of peculiar terror. The Adriatic, its waters seldom at rest—**Hadria inquietus**—is lashed to fury by the driving South wind, **Auster**—**Auster** personified as **dux** ² **turbidus**, boisterous ruler of a restless sea.

There still remains one final test in which endurance is carried to its highest. Now we see not the passion and fury of a civic mob nor the sharp menace of a tyrant’s frown and word, not nature in her wildest mood nor any mightiest force of earth ; Heaven itself is now ranged on the side of wrong, the mighty hand of Jove hurls his flaming bolts. Yet whether from earth or heaven it is still brute force, and force cannot subdue right.

This verse puts a strain upon our Christian imagination ; it shocks our reason and our sense of piety. To us it is blasphemy to think of the Sovereignty of Heaven, the

ἐγὼ μόνος τῶν πρυτάνεων ἡναντιώθην ὑμῖν μηδὲν ποιεῖν παρὰ τοὺς νόμους, καὶ ἐναντία ἐψηφισάμην· καὶ ἐτοίμων ὄντων ἐνδεικνύμαι με καὶ ἀπάγειν τῶν ῥητόρων, καὶ ὑμῶν κελευόντων καὶ βοώντων, μετὰ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τοῦ δικαίου ᾧ μὴ μᾶλλον με δεῖν διακινδυνεύειν ἢ μεθ’ ὑμῶν γενέσθαι μὴ δίκαια βουλευομένων, φοβηθέντα δεσμὸν ἢ θάνατον.—PLATO, Apol. Soc. 32.

¹ Compare ‘The face of the Lord’.—Ps. xxxiv. 16.

² So also ‘arbitrator Hadriae’ (i. 3. 15), the wind in whose power is storm or calm.

Power Supreme, as wroth with the righteous man and seeking to slay him. That **magna manus**, that mighty hand is for us the hand that protects and delivers the just: 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.'

This is our faith, a faith in righteousness, illuminated, quickened, and confirmed by the revelation that right has her seat in God. But here in Horace is the conception of a morality imputed to the gods, bare and uninterpreted indeed and difficult of apprehension by us, yet absolutely held.

Finally, the stanza closes with the most daring of imaginative pictures—the crash of a world: **fractus orbis**. Let the whole firmament and frame of things be riven, the pure vault of heaven be fractured and fall in ruins on this world beneath, these fragments of a world in ruins shall strike a man **impavidum**, fearless and unshaken still. No crash of worlds can shake him from his hold of truth and right:

**si fractus¹ illabatur orbis,
impavidum ferient ruinae.**

VERSES 9-15^A:

In stanza three great names in Greek legend are cited in illustration of the triumph of this steadfast purpose—**haec ars**—but now the idea of steadfastness develops into that of strenuous action. Our hero is still **tenax propositi**, but the **propositum** is some great enterprise. Effort and toil on earth, unflinching and persistent to the end, conduct the victor to his rest in the heavenly seats. Thus to rock-like steadfastness is added energy unwearied; the quality is the same, but it is seen not now at rest but in action, whence the stress is laid on **hac arte**.

Pollux first, a slighter name, yet was he ever a struggler in a good cause.

Then **Hercules**, whose labours made his earthly life one great series of victorious struggles with evil, ever moving on from one scene of peril to another. No settled home had this great champion of humanity, a wanderer ever—**vagus² Hercules**.

But enisus, one final struggle upwards and the victor reaches the **arces igneas**, the gleaming towers and battle ments of the city on high, there at length to rest after strenuous toil. He,

¹ 'Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.'—Ps. xlv. 2.

² οὐκ ἂν εἰδείης ἕτερον
πολυμοχθότερον πολυπλαγκτότερόν
τε θνατῶν.—EURIP. HERC. 1196.

His soul well-knit and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

From these servants of humanity our thought is carried on to the Servant par excellence, 'Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.'

Then straightway old legend flashes into recent history. The poet interpolates a vision of the great Emperor, the Imperialist Chief who, through stress and conflict, had consolidated the Roman State. The characteristic Roman note of devotion to the State is struck and, in the name **Augustus**, is turned to exquisite compliment.

The long doubtful struggle over and the battle won, the poet sees **Augustus** joining the ranks of heroes and demi-gods¹ who have overcome. Repose and banquet and song await him, the quaffing of nectar, drink of the immortals, with purpling lip. It is the classical equivalent of the mediaeval New Jerusalem:

Jerusalem the golden!
With milk and honey blest!
Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me!
When shall my labours have an end,
In joy and peace, and thee?

Then, as though festival had recalled the poet to the legends of Hellas: 'Hail to thee Dionysus, **Bacche pater**, thyself a wanderer through Asia and Europe, wanderer and struggler establishing thy cult in the earth—the culture of the soil, the planting of the vine!'

Not simply as the bestower of wine and patron of revelry and song is he here regarded but also as civilizer of mankind; his gift is culture of the soul as well as culture of the soil.

The glorious muse of Greek Tragedy rises before us having as its seat the Temple of Dionysus. Here Bacchus is pictured, passing heavenwards in his car of triumph, drawn by fierce tigers whom none but he could tame and yoke. Out from their native jungle in the far East the savage creatures come, yielding to his sway, owning him as lord. Bending their necks to his yoke they draw the victorious chariot to his place of rest: **tuae vexere tigres**.

VERSES 15^B–68:

Then clear again rings out the Roman note—**Quirinus**, founder of the city, builder of mighty Rome. He too by

¹ For the deification of Augustus see Epistles ii. 1, and the interesting note of Sir Theodore Martin *in loco*. Works of Horace, ii. 342.

this same virtue of the soul—*hac arte, tenax propositi*—is borne aloft on the fleet steeds of his father Mars; having escaped the dark river of Death he claims to live among the immortals.

But how has he achieved this with the curse of Troy upon him?

The poet gives us in vision a session of the great gods in council. Juno, arch-foe to Troy and the Trojan line, has at last given her consent¹ to his admission. Seated there in council the majestic Queen of heaven addresses them:

gratum elocuta consiliantibus

Iunone divis.

She speaks, and her word is welcome, for they love the steadfast and the brave. But there is wrath still shooting up like forks of flame in her opening sentences, wrath and withering contempt, and in consenting she sets up a hedge of stern conditions barbed with fierce threats.

This episode of Juno's speech to the gods in council may be regarded as supplying the foil to the noble figure of the *vir iustus*, the righteous man.

The city of Troy, founded on treachery and perjury, lies in indistinguishable ruin. Victory and the repose of the blessed are the guerdon of steadfastness, and of toil and effort in the cause of good; ignominy and desolation the irrevocable penalty of fraud and lust.

So from Ilion's city stands forth, representative of Trojan perfidy, the figure of Paris, Priam's son. He is stigmatized as *iudex incestus*, *incestus* and so *fatalis*, for his lustful judgement of the three goddesses was the seed of fateful ruin to himself, his city and his father's house. So, too, the partner in his guilt, the peerless Helen, stands in this vivid light of the right and pure as *mulier peregrina*, *Lacaena adultera*.

And the queen pours forth her torrent of invective:²
 'Ha! Ilion, Ilion, builded by heavenly gods, yet now thou liest a ruined heap thy towers turned to dust, all men know why. Priam's son thy doomsman—Paris, fair, handsome, gallant, who bore a rotten heart within. Helen, "pearl of

¹ ἔρις γὰρ ἐν θεοῖς σύλλογός τε σοῦ πέρι
 ἔσται πάρεδρος Ζηνὶ τῷδ' ἐν ἡματι.
 "Ἦρα μὲν, ἥ σοι δυσμενὴς πάροιθεν ἦν,
 νῦν ἐστὶν εὖνους κἄς πάτραν σῶσαι θέλει
 ξὺν τῇδ', ἢν' Ἑλλὰς τοὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου γάμους,
 δῶρημα Κύπριδος, ψευδονυμφεύτους μάθῃ.

EURIP. *Hel.* 878-83.

² manet alta mente repostum
 iudicium Paridis spretaeque iniuria formae.—Aen. i. 26.

fair women," men called her, "**mulier peregrina**, foreign woman, Spartan adulteress," I.

'Aye, but before the flight of the guilty pair from the home of Menelaus the mischief began. The evil seed was sown when the young shepherd, feeding his flock in the vales of Ida, was summoned to decide between us three—myself, Queen Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite.

'A shepherd lad to award the Apple of Discord to goddesses! How I loathe the thought!

'He to judge! **iudex**¹ **incestus**, a judge corrupt and impure. That moment did Fate register his doom: **fatalis incestusque iudex**.

'Twas then that **Ilion** perished and her line of kings.

'Entangled in the meshes of Fate wert thou when thou didst hurry back to Troy with that fair foreign woman, Aphrodite again ensnaring. Rapt from her husband's home in Sparta, see Helen enter as a bride the city of Troy, but lo, after her the storm of war from Hellas; war which in ten long years brought the proud city to the dust.'

Nay, but earlier still the seed had been cast into the ground; back in the days when **Ilion** was founded, for it was founded upon fraud. See how the figure of the **vir iustus** stands out by force of contrast with his opposite, old **Laomedon**, first king of Troy, a perjured man. He stood not to his bargain when the gods Apollo and Poseidon helped build his city walls: **vir iniustus**,

destituit deos

mercede pacta Laomedon.

But the false shall never escape their doom. Condemned when they succeed, soon or late they shall be stricken down.

The mills of God grind slowly,

But they grind exceeding small.

'Condemned to me!' cries the Queen of Heaven, 'to me and to the virgin goddess Minerva, yea to us whom **Paris** set aside in the glens of Ida, preferring the charms of Venus. Now see the sentence executed to the full on city, prince and people—**cum populo et duce fraudulentō**—all in one common doom o'erthrown.'

As she dwells upon the crime and its punishment again she calls up the form of the hated **Paris**, **famosus hospes**, infamous guest, who, fine gallant that he was, entering the

¹ ἔνθ' ἄλλοις μὲν πᾶσιν ἔηνδανεν, οὐδέ ποθ' Ἥρῃ
οὐδὲ Ποσειδάων' οὐδὲ γλαυκῶπιδι Κούρῃ,
ἀλλ' ἔχον ὥς σφιν πρῶτον ἀπήχθετο Ἴλιος ἱρή
καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου ἕνεκ' αὐτῆς,
ὅς νείκεσσε θεάς, ὅτε οἱ μέσσαυλον ἱκοντο,
τὴν δ' ἦνῃσ' ἢ οἱ πόρε μαχλοσύνην ἀλεγεινήν.—II. xxiv. 25-30.

home of the Spartan king, filched away his wife. The brave show of the young prince won upon the peerless Helen, shining in her eyes till, having fallen from wife to adulteress, she fled by stealth with her false lover to his home in Ilion.

But the avenging Furies were on their track. Agamemnon and his allied Greeks sailed in pursuit and for ten years the tide of bloody war flowed and ebbed on the plains of Troy. Again and again noble Hector's valour thrust back the avenging host. Nay, the gods themselves took sides with Trojan and with Greek. 'Shame on us!'

But the end was reached at last and the perjured house of **Priam** fell in ruins. 'Long passed from the scene ere this trespass and judgement, crime and vengeance, both; the bitter strife, once protracted by our dissensions, has long been hushed:

**nostrisque ductum seditionibus
bellum resedit.'**

So, sated with vengeance, 'Henceforth,' says Juno, haughtily condescending, 'I will yield up my just, fierce wrath. Grandson of mine I must own he is, though I hate him and his race. What though his mother was that detested Trojan priestess, yet did she not bear him to **Mars** my son?

'Then let it be peace, peace at last. I, Heaven's queen, will of my grace unbar the gate and suffer him to enter the shining seats of the Immortals, yea, and quaff our nectar, and be enrolled among the serene ranks of the heavenly gods:

Protinus et graves

**iras et invisum nepotem,
Troica quem peperit sacerdos,
Marti redonabo; illum ego lucidas¹
inire sedes, ducere nectaris
sucos et adscribi quietis
ordinibus patiar deorum.'**

But though this grace is granted the old fury blazes up anew and conditions are imposed. Perjured Ilium must lie for ever crushed and Rome must claim no link with Troy. So long as the raging deep divides ruined Troy from mighty Rome so long let these exiles wander where they will and set up their kingdom, happy only if they keep sundered from their ancestral seats:

**dum longus inter saeviat Ilion
Romamque pontus, qualibet exsules
in parte regnanto beati.**

¹ So Homer writes of Olympus:

οὐτ' ἀνέμοισι τινάσσεται οὔτε ποτ' ὄμβρῳ
δεύεται οὔτε χιὼν ἐπιίλνεται, ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἶθρη
πέπταται ἀνέφελος, λευκὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν αἴγλη.
τῇ ἐνὶ τέρπονται μάκαρες θεοὶ ἥματα πάντα.—Od. vi. 43-46.

Once more the harsh condition is emphasized. Her eye has swept over the separating sea, the wild waters that rage between Italy and the Troad. Her gaze rests now, fiercely gloating, upon the shapeless mounds that mark the site of the fair, proud city which the gods themselves had helped to build. Truly they have 'made of a city an heap, of a defenced city a ruin', 'desolations of many generations'.

She sees the wild cattle of the nomad tribes ranging freely over the palaces of princes; they leap insultingly where **Priam**¹ and his accursed son lie in their forgotten graves.

Nay, not herds of cattle only but wild beasts make their lair in these forsaken tracts and bring up their young, safe from hunter's spear and snare.

This then is the stern pact which the jealous Queen of Heaven ratifies in the council-chamber of the gods. So long as Troy is a ruin and a desert, so long let the proud Capitol stand, a gleaming citadel, dominating a subject world:

**dum Priami Paridisque busto
insultet armentum et catulos ferae
celent inultae, stet Capitolium
fulgens.**

And see how the characteristic genius and glory of Rome are touched upon. Not victory, conquest, triumph merely are hers; she is also the lawgiver to the world:

**triumphatisque possit
Roma ferox dare iura Medis.**

Yes, so long as Troy remains unvisited and unrestored, so long may proud Rome remain the dread of the world, so long extend her name and sway and the Imperium Romanum range the broad earth to its furthest limit. From East to West shall she rule, from where the narrow straits of Hercules divide Europe from Africa to where the swelling Nile with fertilizing flood submerges the rich cornlands of Egypt:

**horrenda late nomen in ultimas
extendat oras, qua medius liquor
secernit Europen ab Afro,
qua tumidus rigat arva Nilus.**

Glorious future! But again let Rome beware, for there is peril in conquest and in wide dominion. Luxury and extravagance too often supervene and sap the foundations of great empires.

¹ The body of Priam, according to Virgil, was left unburied:

iacet ingens litore truncus,
avulsumque umeris caput et sine nomine corpus.

Aen. ii. 557.

Beware that auri sacra fames, that cursed greed of gain, that lust of gold which eats as doth a canker into a nation's heart. Gold must be spurned if the hardihood, simplicity and courage that won these victories are to be maintained.

Better had the ore for ever remained undiscovered, safe hidden in the bowels of the earth, than that sacrilegious hands should snatch it from the temples of the gods, its fitting resting-place, to minister to human luxury and pride.

Let glorious temples rise, lofty and richly dight, but let citizens' homes be modest, plain and unadorned :

**aurum irreperitum et sic melius situm,
cum terra celat, spernere fortior
quam cogere humanos in usus
omne sacrum rapiente dextra.**

Then, indeed, 'twere safe to push the bounds of empire to the utmost limits of the world. 'I grudge not that the arms of Rome should touch the utmost barrier of the inhabited earth, that her sons should explore the scorching South where rages the tropical sun or the far North where storms and cloud and freezing mist hold sway. Free of all lands and climes I make her.

'But hark, take heed ye martial sons of Rome, for only on the conditions I have laid down shall this wide empire be yours :

**quicumque mundo terminus obstitit,
hunc tanget armis, visere gestiens,
qua parte debacchentur ignes,
qua nebulae pluviique rores.'**

But to the promise of universal empire, with the ethical monition lodged in the heart of it, is now added a condition set and stern : *sed*.

'The destiny which I proclaim to the citizen-warriors of Rome, on one condition shall it be fulfilled :

**bellicosus fata Quiritibus
hac lege dico.**

'Condoned but not forgiven is that old ancestral crime, therefore let proud Rome take good heed lest natural piety presume too far, lest self-confidence breed an audacity too daring and the fortune I have permitted be abused to break my law :

**ne nimium pii
rebusque fidentes.**

'Let her take heed lest a mad resolve be taken to build again the homes of the ancestral Troy whence sprang her race : *ne . . . avitae tecta velint reparare Troiae.*'

The Queen's voice grows sterner, the smouldering fires glow in her tone, 'Let Rome beware when she harks

back to ancient Troy. Her glorious power—**stet Capitolium fulgens**—rests on an interdict. Should the fortune of Troy be suffered to rise from the dust, reborn as the Phoenix from ashes, it shall be with sure augury of desolation and wailing :

**Troiae renascens alite lugubri
fortuna.**

‘The past shall live again in truth. The story shall be repeated, all the tale of slaughter and of ruin : **tristi clade iterabitur**. Again shall ye behold me at the head of my victorious hosts, me, Queen of Heaven, consort and sister of great Jove :

**ducente victrices catervas
coniuge me Iovis et sorore.**

‘Warlike ye may claim to be and conquerors of the world, but against me ye shall be a routed rabble. Nay, though thrice shall rise that wall of brass which Phoebus built, thrice shall it fall razed to the ground by my chosen Argive host. Thrice shall the voice of lament and wailing be heard, as in widowhood and bonds the captive weeps for her husband slain and the mother for her sons :

**ter si resurgat murus aeneus
auctore Phoebo, ter pereat meis
excisus Argivis, ter uxor
capta virum puerosque ploret.**

‘Let Rome beware.’

VERSES 69-72 :

‘Nay, but may heaven forgive. These are no strains to suit my lyre, this merry lute of mine : **non hoc iocosae conveniet lyrae**.

‘Whither art thou hurrying me, my Muse ?

‘Cease, thou wanton, to report the speeches of the heavenly gods in council, and with thy feeble strains to lower and belittle the majesty of a theme too great.’

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. III CAR. IV

LIB. III CAR. IV

Descende caelo et dic age tibia
regina longum Calliope melos,
seu voce nunc mavis acuta,
seu fidibus citharave Phoebi.

auditis an me ludit amabilis
insania? audire et videor pios
errare per lucos, amoenae
quos et aquae subeunt et aerae.

5

me fabulosae Vulture in Apulo
nutricis extra limen Apuliae
ludo fatigatumque somno
fronde nova puerum palumbes

10

texere, mirum quod foret omnibus,
quicumque celsae nidum Acherontiae
saltusque Bantinos et arvum
pingue tenent humilis Forenti,

15

ut tuto ab atris corpore viperis
dormirem et ursis, ut premerer sacra
lauroque collataque myrto,
non sine dis animosus infans.

20

vester, Camenae, vester in arduos
tollor Sabinos, seu mihi frigidum
Praeneste seu Tibur supinum
seu liquidae placuere Baiae.

vestris amicum fontibus et choris
non me Philippis versa acies retro,
devota non exstinxit arbor,
nec Siculo Palinurus unda.

25

utcumque mecum vos eritis, libens
 insanientem navita Bosphorum 30
 temptabo et urentes harenas
 litoris Assyrii viator,
 visam Britannos hospitibus feros
 et laetum equino sanguine Concanum,
 visam pharetratos Gelonos 35
 et Scythicum inviolatus amnem.
 vos Caesarem altum, militia simul
 fessas cohortes abdidit oppidis,
 finire quaerentem labores
 Pierio recreatis antro. 40
 vos lene consilium et datis et dato
 gaudetis almae. scimus ut impios
 Titanas immanemque turmam
 fulmine sustulerit caduco,
 qui terram inertem, qui mare temperat 45
 ventosum, et urbes regnaque tristia
 divosque mortalesque turbas
 imperio regit unus aequo.
 magnum illa terrorem intulerat Iovi
 fidens iuventus horrida bracchiis 50
 fratresque tendentes opaco
 Pelion imposuisse Olympo.
 sed quid Typhoeus et validus Mimas,
 aut quid minaci Porphyryon statu,
 quid Rhoetus evulsisque truncis 55
 Enceladus iaculator audax
 contra sonantem Palladis aegida
 possent ruentes? hinc avidus stetit
 Vulcanus, hinc matrona Iuno et
 numquam umeris positurus arcum, 60

qui rore puro Castaliae lavit
crines solutos, qui Lyciae tenet
dumeta natalemque silvam,
Delius et Patareus Apollo.

vis consili expers mole ruit sua : 65
vim temperatam di quoque provehunt
in maius ; idem odere vires
omne nefas animo moventes.

testis mearum centimanus Gyas
sententiarum, notus et integrae 70
temptator Orion Dianae,
virginea domitus sagitta.

iniecta monstris Terra dolet suis
maeretque partus fulmine luridum
missos ad Orcum ; nec peredit 75
impositam celer ignis Aetnen,

incontinentis nec Tityi iecur
reliquit ales, nequitiae additus
custos ; amatorem trecentae
Pirithoum cohibent catenae. 80

BOOK III ODE IV

CULTURE.

And he shall judge between the nations,
and shall reprove many peoples : and
they shall beat their swords into plow-
shares, and their spears into pruning-
hooks : nation shall not lift up sword
against nation, neither shall they learn
war any more.

Isaiah ii. 4.

ille deum vitam accipiet divisque videbit
permixtos heroas et ipse videbitur illis,
pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.

VIRGIL, Ecl. iv.

In the opening stanzas this ode is a glorification of Horace's own call to the poet's consecrated life. It is steeped, as is natural, in the Greek spirit. Its spring is Castalia's fountain, sacred to Apollo and the Muses. The very words of the first stanza—**Calliope, melos, cithara, Phoebi**—bear witness to this. But as the poem proceeds it parts with the mere individual reference, however sweet and sacred to the singer, and moves on to wider and graver issues.

This gives it its true place in the series. Its main purpose is a noble insistence on the intellectual and spiritual aspect of Augustan Rome. It celebrates the victories of the great Emperor as inspired and crowned by those Heavenly Powers to whom the poet's own life is dedicated. In the triumph of order over chaos, of mind over brute force, of social and domestic life over rude lawless passion, the poet finds the true glory of Imperial Rome.

VERSES 1-8 :

But the first word is a link with Heaven, individual, personal. It presents the poet in direct communication with the celestial powers : **descende caelo regina Calliope**. Here we have the conventional invocation of the Muse tracked to its source. It is vivid and vital as on the day that the first singer lifted up his heart to sing.

The poet claims nothing for himself. His genius is the direct and exclusive inspiration of Heaven. To listen and then speak, to receive and then respond, this is all. His

glory is privilege. He is the living organ of the divine *Musarum sacerdos*.

Thus ere he indites a line he looks up to his sovereign lady. 'Descend from high Heaven,' queen of music and of song, **Calliope**, my queen.' The prayer is eager and importunate: **dic age**. 'Come down I beseech thee from thy pure heights, come and indite my song. 'Tis not my part to sing, poet though I be. 'Tis mine to listen rather and to reproduce thy strain. Not mine to choose the key or pitch of note. Let it be **acuta** or **gravis**, high-pitched or deep, with accompaniment as best befits, **tibia** or **fidibus citharave Phoebe**. Let it be all as thou wilt so long as thou leave me not. But let it be **longum melos**, a song sweet, lofty and sustained, "of linked sweetness long drawn out".'

Now a pause while in silence he listens, and then in sudden rapture cries, '**auditis?**'² 'Ah! a voice. Do you catch the heavenly strain? Surely, surely I hear it; or can it be some sweet, mocking fancy that plays with my reason:

an me ludit amabilis

insania?

'Nay, in very truth I hear it, and as I listen old days return and methinks I am once again wandering with senses rapt through those hallowed groves, the Muses' haunts—sweet shades where soft murmuring streams are purling and heavenly airs pass whispering through the leaves:

et videor pios³

errare per lucos, amoenae

quos et aquae subeunt et aurae.'

VERSES 9-24:

'And as I listen memory awakes and carries me far back to those earliest days when the Heavenly Muse first marked me for her own.

'I am a little child once more. Surely then it was that I was sealed from Heaven, consecrated to my high vocation. How I recall that day long past when, a truant child, I strayed

¹ Sing, heavenly Muse, . . . I . . .
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.—Par. Lost, i. 13.

*Μῶσ' ἄγε, Καλλιόπα, θύγατερ Διός,
ἄρχ' ἐρατῶν ἐπέων, ἐπὶ δ' ἕμερον
ὕμνῳ καὶ χαρίεντα τίθῃ χορόν.*—ALCMAN, Frag. 16. Hiller.

² 'etiamne vos, sodales, an ego solus?'—ORELLI.

³ From which the 'profanum vulgus' are excluded. Cf. iii. 1. 1 f.

across the border of my own **Apulia** where my home and nurture lay and idly sported on the mountain slopes of **Vultur** till, tired out with play, I sank down to sleep upon the turf. And as I lay there, lapt in soft slumber, there came the fabled doves¹ with leaves fresh plucked and bestrewed me as I lay:

me fabulosae Vulture in Apulo
nutricis extra limen Apuliae
ludo fatigatumque somno
fronde nova puerum palumbes
texere.

'A marvel to behold! and all the country-side beheld and wondered and knew, forsooth, that I was surely set apart by Heaven for some high destiny. Yea, known to all the dwellers round the portent was, to those who had their nest on **Acherontia's** ridge, to those whose home lay hidden in wooded **Bantia's** glens and to those who tilled the rich low-lying fields of **Forentum**.

'They marvelled all that I, a helpless child, should thus sleep on all fearless and safe from poisonous snake and ranging bear. They marvelled more that I should be bestrewn with no chance wind-blown leaves but with those of the laurel and the myrtle, those sacred trees the Muses love and make their own. Surely it was truth they said when amazed they cried, *non sine dis animosus*² *infans*—verily the heavenly gods are with the fearless child.

'The word was true. There, as I slept a helpless infant, ye marked me, gracious Muses, for your own³ and were breathing even then your spirit into my soul. Henceforth I bore a charmed life and could fear no harm for ever.

'And yours I am, now and for ever yours, wheresoever I go or stay:

vester, Camenae, vester in arduos
tollor Sabinos, seu mihi frigidum
Praeneste seu Tibur supinum
seu liquidae placuere Baiae.

Yours when I hurry away to my loved Sabine hills or when, perchance, my choice bears me to the cool heights of **Praeneste**, to the sunny slopes of **Tibur**, or to the pure air

¹ The doves which drew the car of Venus and were her attendants.

² *animosus* = 'possessing inspiration'. See Page, *in loco*.

³ Pausanias tells how Pindar also had his call from the Muses in sleep:

Πίνδαρον δὲ ἡλικίαν ὄντα νεανίσκον καὶ ἰόντα ἐς Θεσπιάς ὥρα καύματος περὶ μεσοῦσαν μάλιστα ἡμέραν κόπος καὶ ὕπνος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ κατελάμβανεν. ὁ μὲν δὴ ὥς εἶχε κατακλίνεται βραχὺ ὑπὲρ τῆς ὁδοῦ· μέλισσαι δὲ αὐτῷ καθεύδοντι προσεπέτοντό τε καὶ ἐπλάσσουν πρὸς τὰ χεῖλη τοῦ κηροῦ. ἀρχὴ μὲν Πινδάρῳ ποιεῖν ᾄσματα ἐγένετο τοιαύτη.—ix. 23. 2.

and limpid waters of delicious **Baiae**; be it here or there yours am I always and everywhere.'

VERSES 25-36:

'So has it ever been. The grace that protected and blessed the sleeping child has been through all my life my shield and benediction.

'Because I was ever a lover of your fountain-streams and took my place in the dance and the song my life was saved at Philippi¹ on that day when our line was turned to rout.

'Your sacred shield was over me, seated in peace at home, on that other day when that accursed tree² came crashing down and touched me not.

'And when abroad I sailed the rough Sicilian waters my bark passed safely round that dangerous headland, ill-omened **Palinurus**.³

'By land by sea at home abroad safe ever safe was I and all because my life was yours:

**vestris amicum fontibus et choris
non me Philippis versa acies retro,
devota non exstinxit arbos,
nec Sicula Palinurus unda.'**

Then, as the poet looks into the unknown future, his faith sustains his hope and he cries, 'As it has been so shall it ever be, wheresoever I wander and whate'er betide. In all perilous places, so long as ye be with me, I shall still be safe.'

In the ecstasy of his trust he now gives loose rein to his imagination and pictures the risks of wildest adventure, far beyond the outskirts of civilization, amid the savagery of nature or among the fiercest of barbarous tribes.

'Though I love not the sea, yet with you am I ready, a sailor, to brave the madding Euxine, or a traveller by land, to tread the burning sands of the Syrian desert:

**utcumque mecum vos eritis, libens
insanientem navita Bosphorum
temptabo et urentes harenas
litoris Assyrii viator.'**

To bring out to the uttermost his sense of the divine protection he touches upon perils from men more dread than Nature in her wildest mood.

¹ Compare ii. 7. 9-14.

² The poet devotes an ode to his escape from this danger—ii. 13.

³ Called after Palinurus, son of Iasus (or Iasius), the helmsman of **Aeneas** who was murdered on this spot and whose body was left unburied. Cf. *Aen.* vi. 337-81.

As usual he individualizes, attaching to each name an attribute such as to strike with horror the cultivated and luxurious Roman :

**visam Britannos¹ hospitibus feros
et laetum equino sanguine Concanum,
visam pharetratos Gelonos
et Sythicum inviolatus amnem.**

We note the **visam**, twice given. 'Content with no mere travellers' tales I will go myself and with mine own eyes will see those fierce islanders of the far West, the Britons, savage as wild beasts to strangers who visit them. Yet among these shall I still be safe.' This is ever the refrain—**inviolatus**.

'Nearer home I will go among the fierce dwellers in the highlands of Spain, men who find savage joy in quaffing for exhilarating wine the warm blood of wild horses. Yet amid savagery such as this I shall still suffer no hurt—**inviolatus**.

'And, to the East a traveller, I will not fear to cross the Scythian river—that Rubicon of civilization—and plunge into the wilds where the fierce nomads of the Steppes live their wandering life, bow in hand, and quivers full of sharp, poisoned arrows slung at their side. Perils beset on all hands, yet shall I pass through them inviolate—**inviolatus**.

'Safe, yes, blithe and safe let me wander where I may, ye will still be with me, gracious goddesses, for I am yours, yours for ever : **vester, Camenae, vester.**'

VERSES 37-42^A:

Then with a bound the poet quits the personal relation of the singer to the divine Muses, who are the living fountain and inspiration of his song, and touches the very heart of his theme. Without apology or introduction he links his own sacred vocation to that of the imperial Caesar in whose person he would glorify Imperial Rome. Still the emphasis on **vester** is continued, while its range is expanded to the uttermost, and **vos** abruptly strikes the note of the new departure.

What are the glories of warfare, be its triumphs ever so signal, but the introduction to the setting up on earth of that kingdom of renewed and purged Humanity whose atmosphere is unity, peace and concord ?

The lofty **Caesar** is presented as wearied by the struggles of the long conflict with the forces of civil disorder ; eager now at length to finish his labours in the great campaign, he seeks rest and recuperation for himself and for Rome. His war-wearied legions he settles in peaceful towns and newly

¹ The Druids were said to practice human sacrifice : 'cruore captivo adolere aras et hominum fibris consulere deos fas habebant.'—TAC. ANN. xiv. 30.

planted colonies on Italian soil, while he himself retreats from the cares of Empire to find solace and revival for his spirit in the grotto of the Muses. 'Yes, who but you, my own gracious queens, in your own peaceful sanctuary shall bestow upon the great conqueror the rest for which he craves ?

*vos Caesarem altum, militia simul
fessas cohortes abdidit oppidis,
finire quaerentem labores
Pierio recreatis antro.'*

The wars of the Caesar are but the way to peace.

But peaceful rule not less than war calls for wise counsel and the arts of government.

'And ye it is, ye gentle, gracious ones, who now inspire his counsels with your own sweet gentleness. This is your gift, and given, it is still your joy :

*vos lene consilium et datis et dato
gaudetis almae.'*

VERSES 42^B-48:

Then higher and wider still the strain is carried. In a way at once delicate and authoritative the poet assures the exalted ruler of success in this new enterprise. He looks up beyond this petty earthly scene to the World Celestial where are found the eternal types of all that is great and glorious here below. In vision penetrating the dim legends of the past, he sees the whole hierarchy of Heaven in that dread fight with the Powers of Evil which preceded and procured the calm, unquestioned rule of the Monarch Supreme—that

*imperium Iovis,
clari Giganteo triumpho,
cuncta supercilio moventis.*

Let the triumph of great **Iove** over Giant and Titan in the beginning of the world be the pledge of victory to the earthly ruler. What was the victorious warfare of Augustus but some faint earthly transcript of those dread colossal struggles looming out to the poet's prophetic eye from the mist of ages long past ?

And what was that first great victory of spirit over matter, of wisdom and the humanities and art over gross brute force and lawless violence and wrong, but a prediction sure and certain of the full and glorious success of the Emperor of Rome ?

Here the poet strikes a new theme which forms the subject of the ode to its conclusion. He leaves his heavenly patrons, whom hitherto he has addressed, and, turning to his hearers with a certain solemnity of assurance, calls them to bear witness to the truth of his presage.

Scimus. 'This at least we know—the great archetype stands out for ever clear and certain—yes, we know the world is ruled by one above, equitably governed by almighty Jove, Father of gods and men. Here rests our faith secure for the safe, wise governance of this province of his universal empire, our Roman realm :

scimus . . .

imperio regit unus aequo.

'Yes, we know how in the days gone by the Titans in their impious rage, and the banded hosts of monstrous giants, fell at one stroke of the lightning bolt. It fell from Heaven and they were swept away. He who reigns alone the King Supreme let fall from his hand the flaming shaft, and all their might was crushed.'

In a dozen words Horace sketches now the calm, serene, undisputed sovereignty of Jove, supreme over all grades and ranks of the subject world. The sluggish earth yields her obedience to the gracious will that orders the succession of seasons, the sweet vicissitudes of nature. The restless sea, storm-driven, escapes not his curb, the limits which his hand has set. Then the poet rises higher and there comes before him the busy life of cities ; he sees all sorts and conditions of men in the full activities of social and civic life. The scene, so far, lies in the open light of day and sunshine. All is swayed by the one serene unquestioned will.

But the sovereignty of the Supreme extends no less to the dark sad realms of the under-world, and for a moment the poet visits the shadow-land where bloodless phantoms flit and pass. These too own his law.

Then, with a great revulsion, the poet's thought sweeps upward at a bound to the bright hierarchy of heaven, the celestial gods. These too are subject to his rule no less than the material world and the confused crowds of poor mortals who have their brief abode therein. Over all the subjects of an empire founded upon right one Lord reigns with one equal law for all :

qui terram inertem, qui mare temperat
ventosum, et urbes regnaque tristia
divosque mortalesque turbas
imperio regit unus aequo.

We seem to catch an echo of 'The Lord reigneth : let the earth rejoice'.

VERSES 49–64 :

Then a pause as a dread sense of a great terror past and gone flits across the poet's thought and makes him shudder.

'Ah, was there not a time, a crisis in that dread conflict, when to poor human thought the issue seemed to hang in suspense?'

Monstrous figures loom out upon the scene as the poet's kindled imagination summons up the mythic Past. Surely that was an hour when great Jove himself must have yielded for a moment to a mighty fear:

**magnum illa terrorem intulerat Iovi
fidens iuventus horrida bracciis.**

The monstrous form of Briareus stands out, he of the hundred arms bristling with destructive might; and those two giant brethren,¹ who strove to heap mountain upon mountain that they might scale the heights of heaven, had well-nigh succeeded in piling Pelion upon dun, forest-crowned Olympus:

**fratresque tendentes opaco
Pelion imposuisse Olympo.**

Frightful seemed the peril as he called up the scene, but 'twas but seeming. It needed not the might of Jove Supreme to repel the mad assault.

See, 'tis his daughter standing there, calm and stately maid, divine, yet visible in virgin form, with her mighty aegis held in front. Hear the clang of the mad rush against that shield invincible. *Quid possent ruentes?* What could they do, that monster band with all their force and might?

As against the rocky headland the swelling wave breaks in idle thunder and passes in foam and spray, so came to nought the force and fury of this impious crew:

**quid Typhoeus et validus Mimas,
aut quid minaci Porphyryon statu,
quid Rhoetus evulsisque truncis
Enceladus iaculator audax
contra sonantem Palladis aegida
possent ruentes?**

¹ Otus and Ephialtes, the sons of Iphimedeia by Poseidon. The story of Homer (*Od. xi. 305-20*) is that, at the early age of nine years, when already they were 36 cubits in stature, they threatened the gods with war, and to reach them they piled Ossa upon Olympus and Pelion upon Ossa. They would have attained their object had they been permitted to grow to manhood, but they were slain by Apollo

πρὶν σφωιν ὑπὸ κροτάφοισιν ἰούλους
ἀνθῆσαι πυκασαί τε γένυς εὐανθέι λάχνη.

Virgil also tells the story in the *Georgics*:

**ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam
scilicet, atque Ossae frondosum involvere Olympum;
ter Pater exstructos disiecit fulmine montes.—i. 281.**

With this legend should be compared the Hebrew narrative of the building of the tower of Babel on the plain of Shinar (*Gen. xi*), the main connecting link being the presumption which, in both cases, led to the attempt to 'reach unto heaven'.

What avails **Typhoeus**? Nought. And nought the stalwart **Mimas**, embodiment of strength. And nought **Porphyrion** though he stand like a rock with threatening mien and gesture. Nought avails the might of **Rhoetus** nor of that daring spearman **Enceladus** who, with no puny javelin but with huge trunks of trees torn up by the roots, hurled death at his foes.

We hear the clash and clang as idle violence dashes itself against that impregnable ward, the mighty aegis of Pallas **Athene**. Brute force availeth nothing against heavenly wisdom :

quid . . .

contra sonantem Palladis aegida

possent ruentes?

And at her side the fiery **Vulcan**, swart in his strength, hot from his forges, has taken his stand, eager for the fray.

The poet would teach us that the industries of labour have their place at Wisdom's side. They second her struggle with the brute forces of earth :

hinc avidus stetit

Vulcanus.

Yes, and here too the sacred majesty of home, the sanctities of marriage and domestic life in the person of the queenly **Juno**, are at hand to thrust back the tide of barbarous usage : **hinc matrona Iuno**.

Ah! and now the poet's eye lightens and his tone gathers volume and sweetness as he espies the glorious form of **Phoebus Apollo**, his own divine patron. His verse expands as he lingers to gaze upon the beautiful figure of the god coming out clear to his eye—**Apollo**, lord of music and of song, god of light.

See him standing there in all the freshness of immortal youth, his bow at his shoulder, arrows of light his shafts, yet arrows that can carry death to his foes. See him with all the careless grace of one whom no tumult, no rabble can disturb, no peril affright. Never shall he be found unarmed, never shall he lay aside that silver bow :

numquam umeris positurus arcum.

See him standing there as though even now he stood by **Castalia's** fountain when, loosing his locks from the fillet which bound them, he bathed them in the crystal water.

Apollo, glorious and beautiful, who loves to haunt for half the year the woods of his dear native **Delos** and then again to make his home in **Lycia** amid the thickest groves of **Patara** :

qui rore puro Castaliae lavit

crines solutos, qui Lyciae tenet

**dumeta natalemque silvam,
Delius et Patareus Apollo.¹**

What can brutal violence effect against this spiritual force ?

VERSES 65-80 :

Then in one terse, disdainful line the poet compresses the meaning of his vision :

vis consili expers mole ruit sua.

Brute force that has no eye, no mind to guide, no spark within the clod, rushes to its ruin by its own sheer weight and bulk ; but, guided and restrained and inspired, it has the heavenly gods for its ally and they carry it forward to ever greater deeds :

**vim temperatam di quoque provehunt
in maius.**

But one thing these selfsame heavenly powers of righteousness above all else hate and detest and in their wrath will surely bring to nought—the force that is not unguided but guided ill, spent to promote all manner of wickedness cunningly devised and planned.

Here the moral note is strongly sounded. No evil-doer, be he ever so mighty, shall escape his righteous doom :

**idem odere vires
omne nefas animo moventes.**

Again the seer calls up giant figures from the myths of old in proof of his conviction and his strong assertion :

**testis mearum centimanus Gyas
sententiarum.**

‘Let that hundred-handed monster be my witness ; crushed lies the impious giant’s bristling might.

‘Let the famed **Orion**, mighty hunter, be my witness too ; he who in his lawless lust essayed the purity of the huntress, divine **Diana**, virgin goddess. One shaft from the maiden’s bow and the giant fell subdued in death :

**notus et integrae
temptator Orion Dianae,
virginea domitus sagitta.’**

Yes, consider the end of that monstrous brood of earth-born giants that would contest the righteous supremacy of Heaven. And hear the great Earth-mother, how she groans and wails over those buried forms. She who bore them has herself become their grave, heaped upon her own children who shall never rise to light and life again. Hear her deep

¹ Δύκιε καὶ Δάλου' ἀνάσσω
Φοῖβε, Παρνασοῦ τε κρᾶναν Κασταλίαν φίλεων,
ἐθελήσας ταῦτα νόον
τιθέμεν εὐανδρόν τε χώραν.—PINDAR, Pyth. i. 74.

lament for her offspring struck by Jove's flaming bolt and thrust down to the murky depths of Tartarus :

**iniecta monstris Terra dolet suis
maeretque partus fulmine luridum
missos ad Orcum.**

See great **Etna's** mass¹ crushed down upon the struggling, fire-breathing monster. Though the flames shoot out and the molten lava streams forth, yet never shall the swift, devouring fire eat its way through that mountain mass which holds him down :

**nec peredit
impositam celer ignis Aetnen.**

If this be the doom of impiety, note well the vengeance of pure Heaven upon lust. See monstrous Tityos lying there in Tartarus stretched out in all his length, while that fierce bird, appointed by the just gods to be his jailor and his torment, the cruel vulture, never ceases from its gnawing at his vitals :

**incontinentis nec Tityi iecur
reliquit ales, nequitiae additus
custos.**

There too, in the realm infernal, lies the great Pirithous, Theseus' friend, fast bound in endless chains ; he who, trusting to his strength, essayed in the audacity of his lawless love to carry off the queen of Hades.

But see the end of the mad emprise ; he lingers on for ever in bonds which no hand can break :

**amatorem trecentae
Pirithoum cohibent catenae.**

Yes !

**regna tristia
divosque mortalesque turbas
imperio regit unus aequo,**

and under this rule, just and equal, the wicked are punished and the just rejoice. Let all take heed !

¹ Under Mount Etna he lies,

It is slumber, it is not death ;
For he struggles at times to arise,
And above him the lurid skies
Are hot with his fiery breath.

The crags are piled on his breast,
The earth is heaped on his head ;
But the groans of his wild unrest,
Though smothered and half suppressed,
Are heard, and he is not dead.

LONGFELLOW, *Enceladus*.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. III CAR. V

LIB. III CAR. V

Caelo tonantem credidimus Iovem
regnare : praesens divus habebitur
Augustus adiectis Britannis
imperio gravibusque Persis.

milesne Crassi coniuge barbara
turpis maritus vixit et hostium—
pro curia inversique mores!—
consenuit socerorum in armis

5

sub rege Medo Marsus et Apulus,
anciliorum et nominis et togae
oblitus aeternaeque Vestae,
incolumi Iove et urbe Roma ?

10

hoc caverat mens provida Reguli
dissentientis condicionibus
foedis et exemplo trahentis
perniciem veniens in aevum,

15

si non periret immiserabilis
captiva pubes. ‘signa ego Punicis
adfixa delubris et arma
militibus sine caede’ dixit

20

‘derepta vidi ; vidi ego civium
retorta tergo bracchia libero
portasque non clausas et arva
Marte coli populata nostro.

auro repensus scilicet acrior
miles redibit. flagitio additis
damnum : neque amissos colores
lana refert medicata fuco,

25

nec vera virtus, cum semel excidit,
curat reponi deterioribus.

30

si pugnât extricata densis
cerva plagis, erit ille fortis

qui perfidis se credidit hostibus,
et Marte Poenos proteret altero,
qui lora restrictis lacertis
sensit iners timuitque mortem.

35

hic, unde vitam sumeret inscius,
pacem duello miscuit. o pudor !
o magna Carthago, probrosis
altior Italiae ruinis !'

40

fertur pudicae coniugis osculum
parvosque natos ut capitis minor
ab se removisse et virilem
torvus humi posuisse vultum,

donec labantes consilio patres
firmaret auctor numquam alias dato,
interque maerentes amicos
egregius properaret exsul.

45

atqui sciebat quae sibi barbarus
tortor pararet ; non aliter tamen
dimovit obstantes propinquos
et populum reditus morantem

50

quam si clientum longa negotia
diiudicata lite relinqueret,
tendens Venafranos in agros
aut Lacedaemonium Tarentum.

55

BOOK III ODE V

PATRIOTISM

Great heart, bear up! thou art but type
Of what all lofty spirits endure, that fain
Would win men back to strength and peace through love :
Each hath his lonely peak, and on each heart
Envy, or scorn, or hatred, tears lifelong
With vulture beak; yet the high soul is left;
And faith, which is but hope grown wise, and love
And patience which at last shall overcome.

LOWELL.

This ode is an appeal to the manhood of Rome. It is at once a reproach and a rebuke, an urgent call to the recovery of that old Roman spirit which was the secret of Rome's greatness.

It is linked to the preceding ode by a prolongation of the note of parallelism between the earthly and the heavenly realm. Heaven above and earth beneath, the archetype and the type, the heavenly **Jove** and the earthly **Augustus**, his vicegerent here below, are presented. In the Roman **Imperium** the poet sees a transcript of the **Regnum Caeleste**.

VERSES 1-12:

In the first word the note rings clear—the key-note to the whole ode: **caelo**. The poet looks up to heaven, to the bright illimitable vault of the clear sky.

There he perceives **Iovem regnare**, the interpretation of which, for us, is that our hope for earth rests upon our faith in heaven and in the heavenly order.

Then as his eye falls back to earth we have **praesens divus**. With us here on earth in visible presence is a representative of the heavenly king¹—**praesens divus . . . Augustus**.

Looking up to the firmament above we see no shape of majesty, no visible Ruler of the Universe, but there falls upon the ear the deep, solemn muttering of the distant

¹ So elsewhere of Jupiter and Augustus:
tu secundo
Caesare regnes.—i. 12. 51.

thunder, and again, as it draws nearer, the sudden crash from the brooding cloud, while the forked flame darts forth a blinding flash. Then do we know and believe that the vault of heaven veils in light the throne of the Supreme. It is his voice we hear when the thunder crashes, his hand that hurls the bolt when the lightning darts forth :

**caelo tonantem credidimus Iovem
regnare.**

So the Hebrew poet :

‘The God of glory thundereth.

The voice of the Lord is powerful ;

The voice of the Lord is full of majesty.’

But, if the thunder testifies to the rule of the heavenly king, what shall be the sign that here on earth we have a present divinity, a **praesens divus**, reigning as **Jove’s** vicegerent? What shall answer on earth to heaven’s thunder and sustain our faith?

The answer characteristic of the Roman is, **imperium**, and this personified in the great Emperor :

praesens divus habebitur

Augustus.

But see, the perfect tense, **credidimus**, gives place now to the future, **habebitur**. The confidence which the soul has as it looks heavenward wavers when it contemplates the earthly scene.

We shall believe that God is with us here on earth—when? When we see our empire widening to westward and to eastward with new provinces added on the right hand and on the left; when the fierce islanders of the West shall have been included in the ever widening range of Roman dominion—

adiectis Britannis¹

imperio ;

while on the Eastern frontier—and here the tone grows at once grave and incisive—the Parthians, most dangerous of foes, are at length subjected to imperial Rome: **gravibusque Persis.**

The single word, **gravibus**, is pregnant and emphatic. It touches the recent signal check to Rome’s career of victory, and it raises a blush on the poet’s cheek for it points to a blot on the honour of the Roman name.

Had not Roman legions suffered a crushing defeat and lost their standards at Carrhae, and had not Roman soldiers played the coward and the traitor to the majesty of glorious Rome?

¹ A notable feat on account of the ferocity as well as the remoteness of those barbarians; cf. i. 35. 29, iii. 4. 33.

Indignation and contempt give the sting of fire to the question that follows, so sharp in its abruptness :

**milesne Crassi¹ coniuge barbara
turpis maritus vixit?**

It is not defeat alone—that might befall the bravest ; it is the dishonour that went with it, the disgrace that followed it, that cause the anguish. Can it be that a Roman soldier has meekly surrendered? Has a Roman indeed turned craven and lived where he should have died? **Vixit!**

Aye and worse! He has settled down at ease, a subject in the enemy's land and, shame on him, made for himself a new home with a barbarian wife.

Every word stings. The **miles** become **maritus**, and **turpis maritus**.² There breathes in the phrase an ineffable contempt for a Roman degenerate, a recreant fallen from the rank of the **civis Romanus**.

The picture, as it comes out in graphic outline, outrages and shocks the poet's soul and breaks his verse

**et hostium—
pro curia³ inversique mores!**

Hostium is the culminating point of unendurable shame. That a Roman should live content among a barbarian and alien race, should settle down in disgraceful marriage there—this is shame indeed. But that a Roman soldier should do this in the land he went forth to conquer and, among his country's foes, should sink into ignoble age, a labourer in the fields of the man whose daughter he had stooped to wed! The thought makes every Roman blush.

What! can a Roman Senate have sunk so low as to suffer a disgrace so deep? Can the manners, the temper of ancient Rome have so changed to their very opposite? How is the fine gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! yea, turned to dross!

The picture fascinates while it revolts the poet's soul. This Roman soldier turned renegade not only **vixit**—has not been ashamed to live—but see, **consenuit**, has prolonged life into old age.

The figure of an old man is seen, grey-headed and

¹ M. Licinius Crassus Dives was associated with Caesar and Pompey in the triumvirate. Through jealousy of his colleagues, and in emulation of their military achievements, he entered on a disastrous campaign against the Parthians. This culminated in the battle of Carrhae (53 B.C.) in which 20,000 men were killed and 10,000 taken prisoners. It is the fate of the latter which is referred to by Horace as perhaps the most signal disgrace to which Roman troops were ever subjected.

² Compare Virgil, of Cleopatra, wife of Antony :
sequiturque (nefas!) Aegyptia coniunx.—Aen. viii. 688.

³ The Senate, which met in the Curia Hostilia.

with toil, still at work in the fields, yet not in the fields which he knows so well and which enclose the homesteads of Italy. In eastern dress he tills an alien, nay, a hostile soil in a land where every sign makes it clear that here the *Mede*¹ is king.

‘And can it be that this old toiler is a *Marsian* born, sprung from a race whose sons rank among the staunchest and the bravest of the legionaries of Rome? Nay, he may even be a native of my own *Apulia*.² May God forfend! Can this be he whose glorious boast it was to be a citizen-soldier of Rome?’

Then the symbols and pledges of his city’s glory come up one by one before the poet’s gaze, each staining with deeper dye the disgrace of a Roman who has slighted them; those shields of gold which fell from heaven in the days of old, sacred symbols of heaven’s protecting favour; and that cry, ‘*civis Romanus sum*,’ which but to utter once thrilled his pulses and caused every alien breast to tremble. Who could dream that a *Roman toga*³ should ever have covered a breast now become so degenerate? What! is all forgotten? even the flame that glows on *Vesta*’s sacred hearth,⁴ that eternal flame, symbol of *Rome*’s own eternity? Can *Roman* soldier sink so low while great *Jove*’s throne in heaven still stands, and on the *Capitol* at *Rome* gleams forth his shrine reflecting heaven’s beams—while city and temple stand unscathed:

*anciliorum et nominis et togae
oblitus aeternaeque Vestae,
incolumi Iove et urbe Roma?*

VERSES 13-40:

Horace now dexterously puts his protest and his plea in the mouth of *Regulus*,⁵ the national hero, true type of all a soldier-citizen of *Rome* should be. He freely uses the legend of *Regulus*’ mission from *Carthage*.

¹ Justinus says of the Medes: ‘exercitum non, ut aliae gentes, liberorum, sed maiorem partem servitiorum habent: quorum vulgus, nulli manumittendi potestate permessa, ac per hoc omnibus servis nascentibus, in dies crescit.’—xli. 2. 5.

² ‘bellicosissimi Italiae populi. libenter, ubicunque potest, suae Apuliae meminit poeta.’—ORELLI.

³ Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam.—VIRG. Aen. i. 282.

⁴ ‘Virgines Vestales in urbe custodiunt ignem foci publici sempiternum.’—CIC. de Leg. ii. 20.

⁵ M. Atilius Regulus was consul for the second time in 256 B.C. He was sent to Africa to prosecute the First Punic War which was then in progress (264-241 B.C.). After a successful campaign waged against the Carthaginian generals, he suffered a serious defeat at the hands of Xanthippus, a Lacedaemonian mercenary, to whom the charge of the

The verse begins with an emphatic **hoc**. Ah! this it was that **Regulus** foresaw when he made that stern choice of his. Yes, this it was that he would have hindered at more than the cost of life when sent an envoy from Carthage to plead for a peace which, if he would but consent to it, should set him safe and free.

But **Regulus** was a true son of Rome, a patriot indeed, integer vitae, tenax propositi. Prescient, because so simply whole-hearted and true to Rome, he foresaw the ruin that would befall her if he swerved from the line of honour and faith. If Rome is to be saved *Carthago delenda est*. Therefore war to the bitter end was his stern counsel to the wavering Senate—**labantes consilio patres**—even though he who gave it must go back to torture and to death.

Sent with the embassy from Carthage to urge exchange of prisoners and if possible to negotiate terms of peace, the high-souled patriot would lend no aid to conditions which in his eyes were disgraceful:

**dissentientis condicionibus
foedis.**

Men who had proved such recreants to honour had forfeited their country and the rights of citizens. 'Twere base to ransom renegades. 'Twere just, as it were wise, to suffer them to die unpitied when they had stooped to buy their lives of Rome's enemies. The hero's prescient mind tracked too surely the ruin that should flow to Rome in the ages to come from a precedent so base:

**et exemplo trahentis
perniciem veniens in aevum,
si non periret immiserabilis
captiva pubes.**

In interpreting this passage it is necessary to bear in mind that at the time Horace wrote there was a party in Rome clamorous for negotiation¹ with the Parthians, for the restoration of the standards of **Crassus** taken at Carrhae, and of the prisoners of war still held captive. The condoning and virtual abetting of the moral ignominy attaching to such captives Horace here, in the person of **Regulus**, fiercely opposes.

To paint in sharpest outline and in deepest colours

Carthaginian troops had been committed. He was taken prisoner and remained in captivity for five years, when he was sent to Rome with the embassy to which reference is made below. Cicero holds **Regulus** up to admiration as a conspicuous example of one who practised 'honestas' (honour) as against 'utilitas' (expediency), *de Off.* iii. 99-101. Also as an example of fidelity to an oath given to an enemy, *de Off.* i. 39.

¹ This negotiation was actually carried through in 20 B.C. Coins are extant which bear the legend, **SIGNIS PARTHICIS RECEPTIS**.

the moral delinquency of these men the poet drops his own speech and makes the legendary hero of old Rome tell what his own eyes had seen when he was held captive at Carthage. And, knowing full well how the loss of the standards, the eagles of Rome, at the defeat of **Crassus**, rankled in the memory of men, the first word that the poet sets on his spokesman's lips is, **signa**. He makes us see Roman standards nailed to Punic temple-walls, trophies of that shameful fight when Roman soldiers let them slip from their feeble hands.

But was there ever such a sight as this? Nay, surely that could never be.

But hearken to the testimony of **Regulus** himself, whose every word cuts like steel. 'I, with my own eyes, have seen it. I have seen the standards that should move forth to victory lying captive at rest. I have seen the symbols of Rome's majesty nailed to the wall in Punic shrines where all Rome's enemies may see and scoff as they sing their song of triumph:

**signa ego Punicis
adfixa delubris** dixit
' vidi.'

But the stern warrior has still more, has worse to testify. 'Dead emblems fixed to dead walls are shame enough, but mine eyes have seen a deadlier disgrace. I have seen living men, in the guise of soldiers of Rome, yield up without a blow the arms they bore to conquer or to die. I have seen the bloodless swords wrested from their coward grasp:

**et arma
militibus sine caede** dixit
'derepta vidi.'

'Yea, and I have seen these cowards, once free men and reckoned citizens of Rome, hurried through their mocking foes like runaway slaves, their arms bound by twisted cords behind their backs.'

Instantly the scene widens and we see Carthage free from war's alarms; her territory is secure, her gates flung wide; no sentry is at his post, her smiling fields, once wasted by Roman arms, now lie in peace, retitled. And the labourers bending to their toil are Roman soldiers, serfs to the people they set forth from Italy to conquer.

Then, from branding the disgrace, Horace turns scornfully to denounce the policy of condoning it and of redeeming from captivity cowards such as these:

**flagitio additis
damnum.**

The true soldier's contempt for gold puts a sting into the *scilicet*—forsooth! while the unthinkable association of *auro* with *miles* still further sharpens the tone:

*auro repensus scilicet acrior
miles redibit.*

'Think you, forsooth, that one who tamely surrendered to the enemy will come back a keener soldier than he went forth to war, *auro repensus*—bought and sold like merchandise! Will sordid bargaining work a change of temper? A bad bargain verily is that in which to dishonour is added damage—damage to the morale of every Roman soldier.'

Then follows a picturesque analogy. Wool that has lost its rich purple, no dipping in base sea-weed dye will ever restore to its hue:

*neque amissos colores
lana refert medicata fuco.*

Nay, nor does true valour, once fallen from its place in men's souls, care ever to find its seat again in those hearts' degenerate:

*nec vera virtus, cum semel excidit,
curat reponi deterioribus.*

'Fools to believe it! Let the chase teach you. Does the frightened hind, set free from the hunter's toils, turn to bay and fight? Then verily expect yon weakling to be brave who, in trembling fear, has trusted his coward life to faithless foes:

*si pugnat extricata densis
cerva plagis, erit ille fortis
qui perfidis se credidit hostibus.*

'Then, indeed, you may believe that the poor spiritless wretch who felt no flush of shame when the thongs bound back his arms,² the coward who shrank from death but not dishonour, will be the soldier on some new battle-field to crush the might of Carthage!

'A man who treats with the foe for his life, who confounds a soldier's duty with the bargaining of trade, who does not

¹ 'Salt is good: but if even the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?'—Luke xiv. 34.

² For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift . . . and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again.'—Heb. vi. 4-6.

'*nec lanarum colores, quibus simplex ille candor mutatus est, elui possunt. et haec ipsa magis pertinaciter haerent, quo deteriora sunt. nam bona facile mutantur in peius; numquando in bonum verteris vitia?*'—QUINTIL. i. 1. 5.

² δῆσε δ' ὑπίσσω χεῖρας ἑυτμήτοισιν ἱμάσι,
τοὺς αὐτοὶ φορέεσκον ἐπὶ στρεπτοῖσι χιτῶσι,
δῶκε δ' ἐταίροισιν κατὰγειν κοίλας ἐπὶ νῆας.—Il. xxi. 30-32.

know that his own valour is the one way to save his life—
shall such an one, in another Punic war, trample upon
the foe?

Marte Poenos proteret altero,
qui lora restrictis lacertis
sensit iners timuitque mortem.

hic, unde vitam sumeret inscius,
pacem duello miscuit.

‘Oh! shame on thee, great Rome! while thou, mighty
Carthage, sittest throned on the ruins of a Rome disgraced!

o pudor!

o magna Carthago, probrosis
altior Italiae ruinis!’

VERSES 41-56:

A scene follows which, in its severe outline and condensed significance, gives us the very essence of that Roman ideal of which the central figure is the pure and primitive embodiment. Remonstrance and rebuke are done with. **Regulus** has spoken—has uttered words terse and stinging. Now he stands silent before the Senate, his mute gesture more pointed and eloquent than impassioned speech, demonstrating in every line of figure and feature the high doctrine of patriotism he has just set forth.

Thus Horace recurs to the legend. **Fertur**: the tradition is that the noblest of Rome’s sons denied himself the simplest rights of Rome’s humblest citizen. **Ut capitis minor**, as one disfranchised, no longer citizen of Rome but prisoner of war in the hands of Rome’s enemies, we see him standing there. A citizen no more, he will indulge no sentiment of pure domestic joy. He renounces his rights as husband and father.

There is delicate implication here that true patriotism enshrines at its heart purity and constancy to home and family. The embrace and kiss of wife and children are no longer for this man. He puts them from him; in his stern creed they are no longer rightly his.

So the stern Roman stands there, silent as a statue and as fixed in his resolve; his face set like a flint, no sign, no word, his gaze fixed on the ground:

fertur pudicae coniugis osculum
parvosque natos ut capitis minor
ab se removisse et virilem
torvus¹ humi posuisse vultum.

¹ Ξανθίας. ἡ που βαρέως οἶμαι τόδ’ Αἰσχύλον φέρειν.

Αἰάκος. ἔβλεψε γοῦν ταυρηδὸν ἐγκύψας κάτω.—ARISTOPH. Ran. 803.

Simply waiting he stands, waiting for the result of his appeal; this given, he will at once away, back to his dungeon and its horrors. He adds no further plea to the strange counsel he has so inflexibly and sternly given. Like a rock amid seething, tossing waters he stands there solitary, and yonder, on the outskirts of the scene, is faintly imaged the thronged Senate-house in feverish debate, a vacillating crowd. But this man is indeed *integer vitae, propositi tenax*, and so he waits until his will shall have consolidated theirs.

Then in a moment, not lingering but hasting, he thrusts aside his weeping friends and speeds, glorious exile, through the throng, alone to death:

*donec labantes consilio patres
firmaret auctor¹ numquam allas dato,
interque maerentes amicos
egregius properaret exsul.*

Albeit he knows all the while the horrors that await his return² to cruel Carthage, blind to no fact he masters all. It is a perfect picture of the mastery of circumstances, and this in absolute calmness, without demonstration, without spasm of excited feeling.

We see him gently putting aside his pleading relatives and thrusting apart the throng that would hold him back. Neither home nor friends nor city should turn him a hair's breadth from the sharp, clear line of his own free will.

And thus he passes from them as calmly and cheerfully as though 'twere but a day's work in the city done at length—the weary pleading of some client's suit, ended at last by the patron's decisive word—and then to his holiday; to the quiet country or the sea, away from Rome's hubbub and clamour to rest and freedom.

This is duty sublimated indeed! 'In scorn of consequence' right has been done.

¹ With the idea of 'auctoritas'.

² 'neque vero tum ignorabat se ad crudelissimum hostem et ad exquisita supplicia proficisci.'—Cic. de Off. iii. 100.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HORACE

LIB. III CAR. VI

LIB. III CAR. VI

Delicta maiorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris
aedesque labentes deorum et
foeda nigro simulacra fumo.

dis te minorem quod geris, imperas : 5
hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum :
di multa neglecti dederunt
Hesperiae mala luctuosae.

iam bis Monaeses et Pacori manus
non auspicatos contudit impetus 10
nostros et adiecisse praedam
torquibus exiguis renidet.

paene occupatam seditionibus
delevit urbem Dacus et Aethiops,
hic classe formidatus, ille 15
missilibus melior sagittis.

fecunda culpa saecula nuptias
primum inquinavere et genus et domos ;
hoc fonte derivata clades
in patriam populumque fluxit.¹ 20

¹ Mr. Medley's exposition closes at this point.

BOOK III ODE VI

RELIGION AND MORALS

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me ; and showing mercy unto a thousand generations of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Ex. xx. 5, 6, R. V. (Margin).

This ode can hardly be directly addressed *virginibus puerisque*, but seems rather to be a warning appended to the earlier poems of this book, addressed to parents and guardians when the young men and maidens have been dismissed. The **Romane** individualizes those on whom responsibility for family and state directly rests.

VERSES 1-4 :

Delicta maiorum. These first words strike, as so often, the key-note of the ode. It is the notion of succession, tradition, inheritance, all that which with ourselves has been absorbed into the scientific sphere and summed up in the word, 'heredity.' It is the dominance of race, the transmission of race characteristics governing development. Each generation lives not for itself alone, it inherits and transmits qualities.

And alas ! **delicta**. The poet sighs as he dwells upon the inheritance and bequest of national succession in this aspect of *damnosa hereditas*. **Delicta maiorum** : faults, sins, but especially those suggested by the word **delinquere**—neglect of duty and right, a falling away issuing in deterioration and degeneration.

Alas ! the children expiate their parents' sins. Innocent themselves, they suffer—**immeritus lues, Romane** ; there shall be exacted from thee, O Roman, guiltless though thou be, atonement for thy fathers' sins, till suffering conduce to repentance and reform.

These **delicta** spring from loss of reverence, piety, religion. These must be repented of and reparation made, else the curse cannot be stayed.

But the moral reformation for which Horace calls is given picturesquely in the concrete, in true poetic fashion. So we read :

**donec templa refeceris
aedesque labentes deorum.**

Religion, reverence, piety, are spiritual, but they have their symbols, their expression in the world of sense. Worship is a spiritual exercise, but it finds its embodiment in the visible, palpable world. So Horace's words are **templa**, and **aedes**, and **simulacra**, and, using one adjective, as he habitually does, in a double application, he adds **labentes** as descriptive of the first two.

The word, **templa**, brings before us the larger and more splendid buildings; **aedes**, the minor shrines and sacred places. The etymology of the words may somewhat assist us. **Templum** suggests the consecrated area, 'cut off' (τέμνω) from the world profane; **aedes** is rather the house, the dwelling-place of the god, his shrine.

Alas! both are falling into ruin, mouldering to decay, forsaken and neglected by their worshippers. They must be repaired, remade, rebuilt.¹ Till this be done—**donec refeceris**—the vengeance of heaven will not be appeased.

Then, from the wider **templum** and the more contracted and specialized **aedes**, he passes to the central object of reverence, the **simulacrum**, the sacred image which represents the god who is worshipped. If the shrine is in ruins, what of the statue?

He sees it soiled and grimed² with smoke—**foeda nigro simulacra fumo**, a subtle implication that the very sacrificial offerings have but touched heaven with their meanest part. The bright, clear flame long extinct, all that remains of worship is the grime of smoke. The evidence of neglected piety is the more revolting in the very symbols of religious worship, the tottering fane, the smoke-grimed image; **optimi corruptio pessima**. 'Haste, haste,' the poet cries, 'repent, repent.'

VERSES 5-16:

Then follows in stately and even solemn words the

¹ This ode was probably intended to encourage Augustus in the work of rebuilding the sacred edifices of Rome. Suetonius tells us how he fulfilled it: 'aedes sacras vetustate conlapsas aut incendio absumptas refecit, easque et ceteras opulentissimis donis adornavit, ut qui in cellam Capitolini Iovis sedecim milia pondo auri gemmasque ac margaritas quingenties sestertii una donatione contulerit.'—Aug. 30.

Augustus himself caused the following words to be inscribed on the monument at Ancyra:

DVO · ET · OCTOGINTA · TEMPLA · DEVM · IN · VRBE · CONSVL · SEXTVM · EX · DECRETO · SENATVS · REFECI · NVLLO · PRAETERMISSO · QVOD · EO · TEMPORE · REFICI · OPORTET ·

CAP. XX, 17, 18.

² 'solebant autem statis temporibus simulacra deorum sollemni ritu lavari.'—ORELLI.

enunciation of the axiom, at once moral and religious, which underlies all earthly rule that is sound and permanent, *dis te minorem quod geris, imperas*. It is at once a warning and a precept. Remember, proud Roman, thy boasted *imperium* must rest upon reverent subjection to the gods above.¹ Bear thyself thus and thy rule stands sure. Submission to heaven is the one firm ground of sovereignty on earth.

We seem to catch an echo here from the Hebrew Scriptures: 'Before honour goeth humility.' 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning (the foundation) of knowledge.' Pithily, tersely, the solemn monition is given: *hinc omne principium*,² *huc refer exitum*. Let all thy works begin and end in God; let his will be the spring and issue of all.

Then this poet-prophet lifts up his eyes and looks round upon sorrowing Italy and Rome's outlying realm:

di multa neglecti dederunt

Hesperiae mala luctuosae.

'Give ear to the voice of mourning within thine own shores and look abroad and read thy recent history. What do these hard facts tell and teach in stinging tones? Thy gods, neglected, have avenged themselves. Behold what, in their righteous wrath, their hands have sent upon fair Italy—*Hesperia*, name suggestive of beauty and fruitfulness and the sunshine of prosperity. See how the cloud shadows her, the voice of wailing and lament rises from the stricken land.'

Woes unnumbered have been poured forth from above, heaven's righteous judgements. Recent events have sounded the note of warning. The storm-cloud in the East has burst and smitten the Roman arms.

Not once but twice³ the blow has fallen:

*iam bis Monaeses et Pacori manus
non auspicatos contudit impetus
nostros.*

¹ 'nec numero Hispanos nec robore Gallos nec calliditate Penos nec artibus Graecos nec denique hoc ipso huius gentis ac terrae domestico nativoque sensu Italos ipsos ac Latinos, sed pietate ac religione atque hac una sapientia, quod deorum numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.'—CIC. de Harusp. resp. 19.

² 'maiores vestri omnium magnarum rerum et principia exorsi ab diis sunt et finem statuerunt.'—LIVY xlv. 39.

³ The reference is to two defeats suffered by the Roman troops under M. Antony:

1. In 40 B.C. the Parthians invaded Syria under Labienus, the younger, and Pacorus, and defeated the army of L. Decidius Saxa, the governor of the province, who fled into Cilicia and was there overtaken and put to death by Labienus.

2. In 36 B.C. Antony, having been diverted from his original plan of

The disastrous defeat by the Parthians, touched upon in the last ode, is here tracked to its root. The onset of the Roman legions has led, not to the wonted victory but to shameful rout, for the blessing of heaven has not been sought. The frown of the offended and neglected gods has blighted presumptuous force. The failing morale of Rome's citizen-soldiers has been withered from its root by impiety.

'Roman, thou hast forgotten ;

dis te minorem quod geris, imperas.

See the victors exulting in their spoils from the stricken field, in new trophies added to the meagre torques which they had snatched from meaner foes :

*et adiecisse praedam
torquibus exiguus renidet.'*

Aye, and nearer home the warning note had been heard, though the threatened destruction had been averted. At Actium Rome's fate had trembled in the balance. How narrow the escape had been !

*paene . . .
delevit urbem.*

The vision of Mark Antony's forces, nerved by desperation, aided by the swift galleys of the Egyptian queen, comes up before the poet. The city given up the while to the brawls of factious strife, no supplication is addressed to the majesty of heaven ; each leader seeks his own and not the welfare of the State. And this while the African fleet and the serried ranks of Dacian archers threaten the whole fabric of Rome's dominion :

*paene occupatam seditionibus
delevit urbem Dacus et Aethiops,
hic classe formidatus, ille
missilibus melior sagittis.*

VERSES 17-20 :

And now Horace tracks to its secret spring this desolating flood. Whence springs this peril to the very existence of the imperial City ?

'Tis from the corrupt spirit of the age : *fecunda culpa saecula*. This it is, fruitful in crime, which has defiled the pure fountain of family, social, and civic life.

Where then is the hidden fountain to be found, the well-spring of a true prosperity ?

invading Parthia, and having pushed on into Media, left his legate, Oppius Statianus, to follow him with two legions of Roman soldiers and the baggage. Statianus was cut off and his army destroyed. Mommsen assumes that Monaeses was in command of the Parthian army.—Smith's Dict. of Biog. i. 356, 357.

In the sanctity of the constant marriage bond: **nuptias primum**. This first of all. This befouled, the rising race grows up enfeebled and depraved: **et genus**. Then, individualizing, as is his wont, he puts his finger upon the separate homes—**et domos**—while with strong emphasis he adds:

**hoc fonte derivata clades
in patriam populumque fluxit.**

Yea, from this fountain of evil is it that the stream of disaster has poured in full flood upon our dear native land and on our Roman people:

**fecunda culpae saecula nuptias¹
primum inquinavere et genus et domos;
hoc fonte derivata clades
in patriam populumque fluxit.**

¹ 'doctissimi viri vox est, pudicitiam inprimis esse retinendam, qua amissa omnis virtus ruit: in hac muliebrium virtutum principatus est.'—SENECA, fr. 78 (Haase).

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